

# Countryside

JULY 2016 

FOOD, FARMING & RURAL LIFE



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.....

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## Food, glorious food



As a child of the 80s, I missed out on Fanny Cradock. I am – if one can ever say this – part of the ‘Food and Drink’ generation. Half an hour of Chris Kelly, Michael Barry and Jilly Goolden a week seemed to sum up Britain’s relationship with food. It was, well, something that those Johnny Foreigners did a lot better than us...

To obsess over food just didn’t seem part of our national make-up – after all, we all had microwaves now, and cellophane parcelled packages of food meant we really didn’t need to worry about cooking anymore, and certainly not where our food came from. But every trend has a strong counter-trend, and, whether it was the arrival of the Naked Chef in the late nineties, the foot-and-mouth outbreak of 2001, or the resurgent local food movement, Britain has unquestionably found its foodie bone. This is an edition that celebrates that.

From huge food events to food festivals, farm shops and farmers’ markets, it’s probably no exaggeration to say we’re enjoying a renaissance in how we view and consume food. Our TV schedules, from ‘Saturday Kitchen’ to ‘Come Dine With Me’, are festooned with food programmes, and perhaps what’s most inspiring to me is the rash of food and drink producers making this one of our biggest and greatest industries. I never fail to be impressed by the number of jobs that the farming and food industries provide the country; at the last count it was 3.8 million.

We’ve got some fabulous interviews with producers of wine, whisky and cider, with farmers, butchers, publicans and charcutiers – and, my personal favourite, a whacking four-page feature on entrepreneurs who are cracking the confectionary market. Yes, Rowntree and Cadbury may have been gobbled up by international conglomerates, but look out for NomNom chocolate, Laura’s fudge and Summerdown mints.

We’ve also got more news about a tremendous campaign being launched later this autumn by the food and farming sectors, designed to give yet more impetus to our culinary comeback. It’s called simply ‘Celebrate Great British Food’ – and you can read all about it on page 61-2.

Finally, if your kitchen, like mine, is looking a little tired with the odd faded tea towel, then our ‘Great Kitchen Giveaway’ on pages 38-9 is the place to head!

*Martin*

Martin Stanhope  
EDITOR

## Meet the team



### Clare Hunt

Devon smallholder Clare waxes lyrical about her kitchen production line and tries to rein in her Jill Archer instincts (*see page 53*)



### Nicola Stocken

Is there any plant that captures the senses quite as well as lavender? Nicola doesn’t believe so, as she extols its many virtues (*see page 106-9*)



### Steve and Ann Toon

National parks – the UK’s green lungs provide stunning variation, as Steve and Ann explore (*see pages 85-7*)



### Emily Scaife

Continuing our rural literature series, Emily explores lesser-known writer John Moore, whose legacy continues to be felt today (*see page 75*)



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Revamp your culinary HQ with these gorgeous prizes!





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## Countryside

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# Rural news



## Milkshake is a record-breaker

A popular county show was shaken up by young farmers when they marked World Dairy Day by producing the world's largest ever milkshake.

The bid for the successful world title was made at the Staffordshire County Show, where the freshly-made drink was made using 900-litres of locally-sourced milk, kindly donated by Wells Farm Dairy. Alongside this, the mammoth milkshake contained 50-litres of strawberry ice cream donated by Red Lion ice cream, and a selection of summer fruit berries.

Youngsters from Staffordshire Young Farmers Club made the drink, which will now go down as a Guinness World Record.

Staffordshire YFC County Chairman, Emma Stubbs said the initiative aimed to highlight how delicious a milk drink is while also supporting the dairy industry, which faced many challenges. "The idea of the creating the world's largest milkshake seemed perfect," she said.

After setting the new world record, the milkshake was handed out to those at the show for free.

## Make fast broadband a priority

Rural dwellers and farmers will be left without superfast broadband if the government doesn't address connection as a matter of priority.

Those was the findings of the NFU's broadband report, which estimates the government's £1.7bn broadband delivery programme could leave 1.2 million premises without superfast broadband. Most of these would be in rural communities.

On top of that, it estimated that just 4% of UK farmers have access to superfast broadband, despite it being increasingly essential to their businesses.

NFU vice president Guy Smith said he had heard stories of farmers having to wait 15 hours to download a Countryside Stewardship guidance booklet, a situation he called unacceptable and unsustainable.

"The government is asking farmers to run their businesses in conditions that put them at an immediate disadvantage," he explained. "If our industry is to meet any of the ambitions of the long-awaited government '25 Year Food & Farming Plan', it will be essential for barriers to growth such as poor broadband access, to be removed."



## Healthy harvest for favourite fruit

British strawberry growers are reporting a very healthy harvest this year, with a predicted 11% increase in yields on last year.

That was according to the trade body for growers of UK berries, British Summer Fruits, which also reported demand for berries increasing due to their healthy qualities.

The organisation expects sales for berries to top £1bn in 2016, the first time ever, with strawberries being way ahead of the rest.

Currently, the summer favourite accounts for some £564m - 51% - of the predicted total. The figure means 74,000 tonnes of the strawberries will be sold.

One reason for the leap in sales is Brits adding berries to homemade smoothies and breakfasts.



## Fly-grazing law a success

Campaign work by the NFU has resulted in farmers and landowners being able to better deal with horses dumped on their property.

That's according to Rupert Weaver, assistant land management adviser at the NFU, a year on from laws being passed to make it easier for farmers and landowners to deal with 'fly-grazing'.

The NFU lobbied for the law, along with equine and animal welfare charities, as farmers often can't use their land while the horses are on it, and become liable for feed and vets bills.

When introduced in May 2015, the Control of Horses Act closed loopholes in the Animals Act 1971 that had made it difficult to remove fly-grazed equines.

"Previously, the landowner had to wait 14 working days before disposing of a horse, now it's four, and it's easier to rehome or sell the dumped equine," explained Rupert.

"The Control of Horses Act 2015 was a huge success for NFU lobbying, which has helped to tackle the scourge of illegal horse grazing."





## Trough picture hits the heights

We received scores of entries to our annual #lambingpix photo competition, with Angela Addison's characterful 'lambs in a trough' picture scooping the crown.

"It was one of those rare and glorious moments in the lambing shed when all was quiet," said Angela. "There were plenty of more comfortable places to snooze but these two seemed to like the trough."

"I just thought that they looked to be plotting their next adventure and were being listened into by the small interloper behind."

Angela, from Newport Pagnell, received a gorgeous Louise Cottey wool throw worth £300 courtesy of Dimpsey Glamping as her prize. We had some great pictures sent in for the competition and to see more of them, visit: [countrysideonline.co.uk](http://countrysideonline.co.uk)



## No-go for gnomes

Gnomes, pet graves and trampolines are among Britons' garden pet hates, says a new survey.

To mark its 60th anniversary, paving manufacturer Bradstone asked the public what they'd like to see banned from British gardens. It seems 37% of Brits would like to give the cheery gnome the boot, with just over a quarter disliking pet graves. Hot tubs, outdoor heaters and decking were also consigned to the garden hall of shame.

On the flipside, and reflecting the more naturalistic trend in gardening, longer blooming flowers and a greater presence of wildlife were identified as the most-wanted features in the garden of the future.

Commenting on the results, garden designer Chris Beardshaw said: "It's completely possible to recreate and encapsulate almost any style of garden from any point in history, and from anywhere in the world. So, gardeners simply have to decide how theatrical they want their outdoor space to be."



## Run a farm for a £1 a year

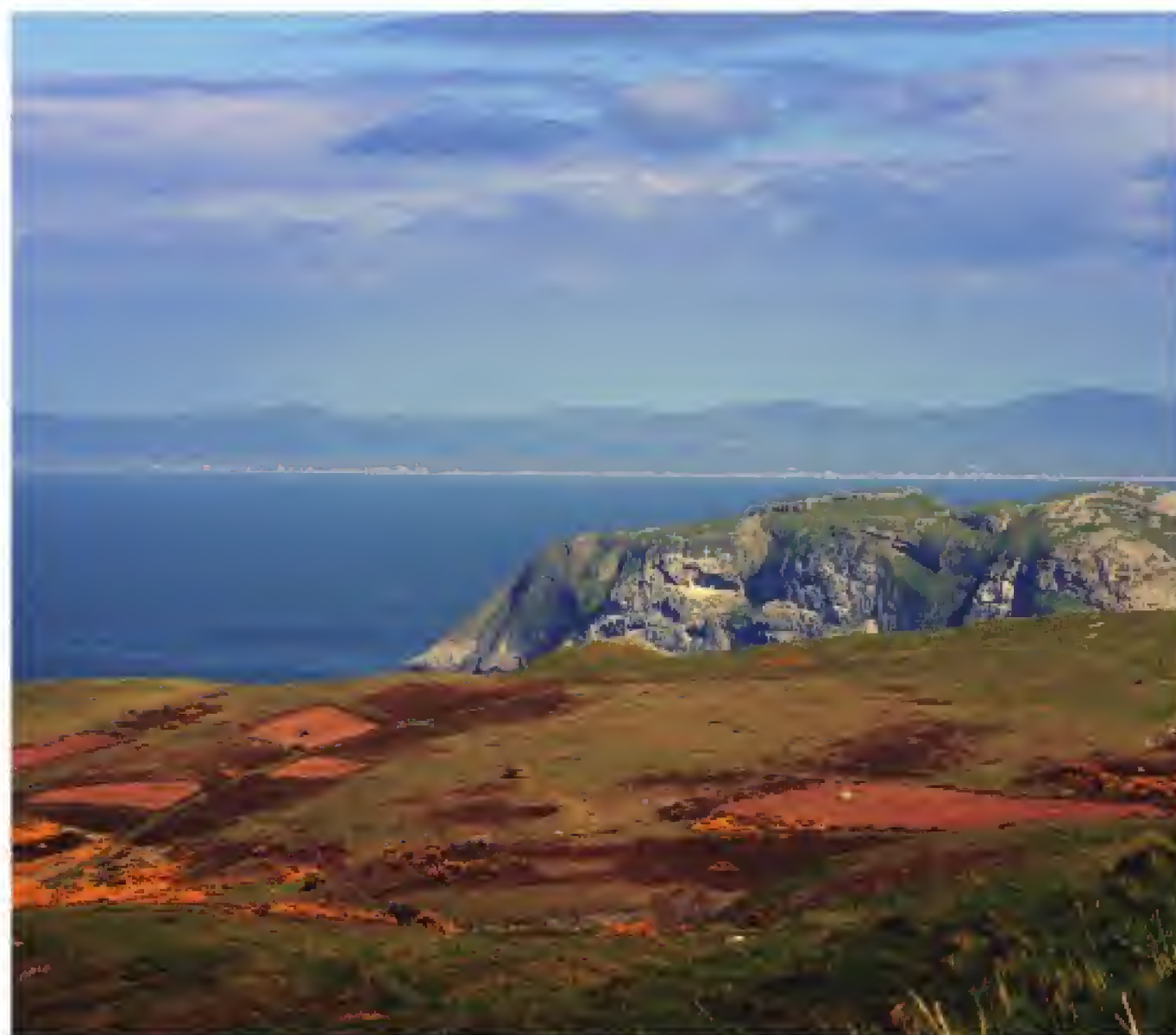
Global interest has been generated by the chance of a £1-a-year tenancy to run the National Trust's farm on the Great Orme.

More than 2,000 enquiries from countries including Australia, Brazil and Japan were received in just the first week after the conservation charity's May launch of its search for someone to run a sheep herd for conservation grazing at the 145-acre Parc Farm on the limestone headland at Llandudno.

The successful applicant will ensure the flock follows a specific grazing regime across the farm and another 720 acres of the Great Orme on which the National Trust has grazing rights to help safeguard internationally rare habitats and species.

"The volume of interest has been incredible. People clearly want to give nature a helping hand and ensure this special place is healthy, beautiful, rich in wildlife and culture and is enjoyed forever for everyone," said a National Trust spokesperson.

The application period has now closed and shortlisted candidates will be interviewed in July and pick the keys up in October.



## Rural life on film

More than 750 archive films focusing on rural life during the 20th century, and many unseen since first shown, have been released online.

The Rural Life films, which date from between 1900 and 1999, are available to view for free on the British Film Institute's BFI Player through an interactive map (<http://player.bfi.org.uk/britain-on-film/map>). Topics covered include the varied history of farming and agricultural methods, seasonal celebrations and travelogues.

There will be more than 160 screening events in 129 locations around the UK of some of the Rural Life archive films.

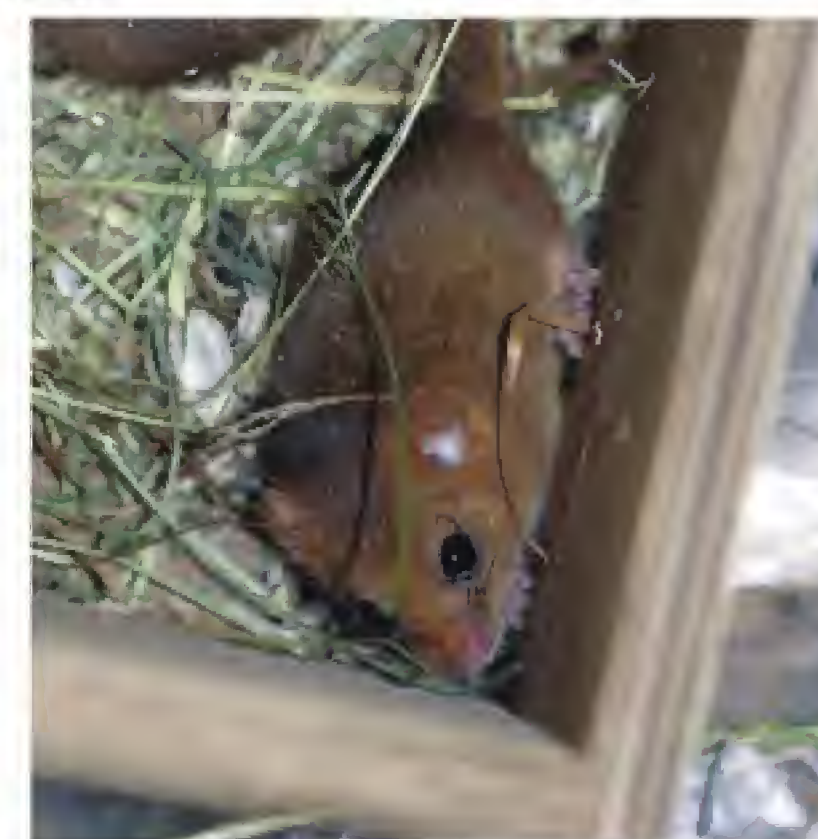
● Visit: [britainonfilmscreenings.org.uk](http://britainonfilmscreenings.org.uk)



## Dormice get helping hand from prisoners

Prisoners at two prisons in England have been helping conserve rare and endangered hazel dormice by building thousands of nest boxes.

Nearly 11,000 boxes have been created by men at HMP Doncaster and HMP Humber since 2010 in a partnership with the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES). The boxes have been distributed to nearly 150 sites to provide new homes for dormice as part of PTES and Natural England's National Dormouse Monitoring Programme.





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## SUMMER FOOD FESTIVALS

Saturday & Sunday August 6th & 7th

### Sandringham Food & Drink Festival

SANDRINGHAM ESTATE

Nr. Kings Lynn PE31 6AZ

Watch an impressive line up of chefs

**SATURDAY:**

Theo Randall, Daniel Clifford  
Holly Bell

**SUNDAY:**

John Torode, Lisa Faulkner  
Holly Bell

Saturday & Sunday  
August 13th & 14th

### Nottingham Food & Drink Festival

WOLLATON PARK

Wollaton, Nottingham  
NG8 2AE

Watch an impressive line up  
of chefs

**SATURDAY:**

Daniel Clifford, Valentine Warner,  
Holly Bell

**SUNDAY:**

Marco Pierre White,  
Brian Turner, Holly Bell

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# Rural news from your region

## ① SCOTLAND

### Investing in our history

More than £10 million is being made available to encourage Scotland's local authorities to invest in their historic environment.

The funding offered by this latest round of Historic Environment Scotland's Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) focuses on repairing and restoring the built environment while helping stimulate economic regeneration.

"Our investments the length and breadth of Scotland both support and inspire people and communities to utilise their heritage for the future," said David Mitchell, Historic Environment Scotland's acting chief executive.

## ② CUMBRIA

### Stepping out on new route

A new 20-mile walking route around Ullswater has been opened. The circular route takes in local villages, including Glenridding and Pooley Bridge that were affected by winter flooding.

"It's a fantastic example of people working in partnership on a project that will, hopefully, give the local economy a much-needed boost," said area ranger Suzy Hankin.

● Visit: [ullswater.com/the-ullswater-way](http://ullswater.com/the-ullswater-way)



## ③ CARMARTHENSHIRE

### New chairman

Malcolm Thomas has become the first Welshman to be elected chairman of the 156-year-old Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution, farming's oldest welfare charity.

A farmer's son from Llangynog, in Carmarthen, he's a rural client manager for JCP Solicitors. Awarded an MBE in 2012 in recognition of his services to agriculture, he has held high profile and influential roles for the Welsh Office, NFU England and Wales and NFU Cymru, is a Young Farmers' Club life member and became a RABI trustee in 2011.

Mr Thomas said RABI's work "is as vital now as it ever has been".

## ④ CORNWALL

### World record shearing attempt

A world record shearing attempt will be made at Matt Smith's home farm near Launceston, in Cornwall on 26 July.

Originally from New Zealand, Matt (32) is aiming to break the nine-hour full wool ewe world shearing record, with the challenge receiving the British Wool Marketing Board's support. The current record is 721 ewes sheared in nine hours.



## ⑤ NORTH YORKSHIRE

### Protecting your tack

Sophisticated property marking machines are being used to help owners protect horse tack from criminals.

The North Yorkshire Police's Horsecatch scheme, which has been relaunched by the force's Rural Taskforce, is planning events at livery yards, feed stores and equestrian shops across the county where horse owners can have leather items of tack marked with a visible permanent unique number by hi-tech 'dot peen' equipment.

"Tack marking is very important as it deters criminals, and if police recover any tack, it can be traced back to the owner," said PC Hannah McPeake, of the Rural Taskforce.

## ⑥ LEICESTERSHIRE

### Tree trial at National Forest

The National Forest is hosting a trial to seek potential tolerance to ash dieback disease in different ash varieties.

More than 4,000 trees have been planted across two hectares of National Forest land, near Ashby de la Zouch, for the five-

year experiment by the Forestry Commission's research agency. It's part of the 'Living Ash' project to identify tolerant trees and bring them together to form a breeding population.

Dr Jo Clark, the project's lead, said: "It's important to the future success of ash that some trees tolerant to Chalara come from trials such as this."



## ⑧ GLOUCESTERSHIRE

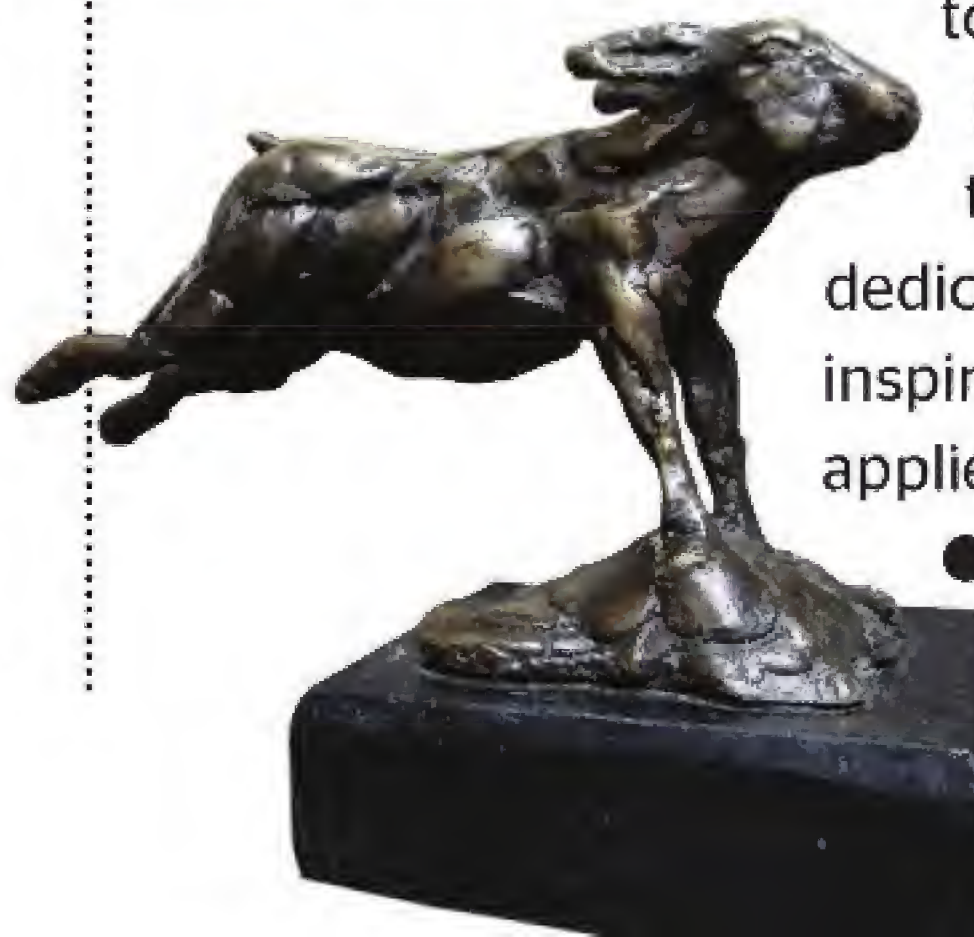
### Nature in art

Wildlife sculptor Elliot Channer, who was featured in November 2015's Countryside magazine, will be the artist in residence at Nature in Art, Wallsworth Hall, Twigworth, from 28 June to 3 July.

He will be displaying his latest works and demonstrating his sculpting techniques

to visitors at Nature in Art, the museum dedicated to nature inspired fine and applied art.

● [nature-in-org.uk](http://nature-in-org.uk)



## ⑦ ESSEX

### Upgrade for college

Writtle College has been awarded University College status. The college, near Chelmsford, was established in 1893 and is a specialist provider of higher education and further education courses including agriculture, horticulture and conservation.

It will change its name to Writtle University College from August.





# JULY

## DIARY DATES



1<sup>st</sup>



**1-3 July - GWCT Scottish Game Fair**, Scone Palace, Perth



**1-10 July - Frome Festival**, Somerset

3<sup>rd</sup>



**3 July - Copthorne Antiques Vintage Retro Fair**, Effingham Park, West Sussex

4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup>



**5-10 July - RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show**, East Molesey, Surrey



6<sup>th</sup>



**6-10 July - Henley Festival**, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire

7<sup>th</sup>



**7-10 July - Barbury International Eventing & Show**, Marlborough, Wiltshire

8<sup>th</sup>



**8-10 July - Royal International Air Tattoo**, RAF Fairford, Gloucestershire



**8-10 July - Kent County Show**, Kent Showground, Detling, Maidstone



12<sup>th</sup>



**12-14 July - Great Yorkshire Show**, Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate



13<sup>th</sup>

14<sup>th</sup>



**13 July - Llandudno Antiques And Collectors Fair**, Town Hall, Llandudno, Conway

15<sup>th</sup>



**15-17 July - Stratford-upon-Avon Home & Garden Show**, Recreation Ground, Stratford-upon-Avon



**15-17 July - Marlborough International Jazz Festival**, Marlborough, Wiltshire

16<sup>th</sup>

17<sup>th</sup>



**16-17 July - Norfolk Showground Antique & Collectors Fair**, Norfolk Showground, Norwich

18<sup>th</sup>



**18-21 July - Royal Welsh Show**, Llanellwedd, Builth Wells, Powys



**18-31 July - Ouse Fest**, Events around the Ouse Washes, Cambridgeshire



23<sup>rd</sup>



**23 July - Bingley Show**, Myrtle Park, Bingley, West Yorkshire



**23-24 July - Great British Food Festival**, Kelmarsh Hall, Northamptonshire



**23-24 July - Cheese & Chilli Festival**, Shalford Park, Guildford



**23-24 July - Midlands Food Festival**, Stoneleigh Park, Warks

24<sup>th</sup>

25<sup>th</sup>



**24 July - Antiques & Collectors Fair**, Dunes Leisure Centre, Southport, Merseyside

26<sup>th</sup>



**26-28 July - New Forest & Hampshire County Show**, The Showground, New Park, Brockenhurst, Hampshire



**26-31 July - Longines Royal International Horse Show**, All England Jumping Course, West Sussex



27<sup>th</sup>




**27 July - Nantwich Show & International Cheese Awards**, Dorfold Park, Nantwich, Cheshire



**27 July - Sandringham Flower Show**, Sandringham Estate, Norfolk



 **1-16 July** - Deal  
Festival of Music and  
the Arts, Deal and Dover


 **1-31 July** - Hampshire  
Food Festival, events  
across Hampshire

 **1-17 July** - Cheltenham  
Music Festival,  
Gloucestershire

 **1-3 July** - Derbyshire  
Sausage & Cider Music  
Festival, Walton upon Trent



**2<sup>nd</sup>**

 **2-3 July** - Cotswold  
Show & Food Festival,  
Cirencester Park


of England Showground,  
Ardingly, West Sussex


 **2-3 July** - Smallholders  
& Country Show, South


 **2-3 July** - Cheese  
& Chilli Festival,  
Basingstoke



**9<sup>th</sup>**

 **9 July** - Tendring Hundred  
Show, Lawford House Park,  
Manningtree, Essex

 **9-10 July** - Great British Food  
Festival, Shugborough, Milford,  
Staffordshire

 **9-10 July** - The Gundog &  
Game Fair, Court Farm, Betley,  
Cheshire

**10<sup>th</sup>**

 **10 July** -  
Antique  
Collectors &  
Vintage Fair,  
Fullhurst,  
Leicestershire

**11<sup>th</sup>**

 **11 July** -  
Stithians Show,  
The Showground,  
Stithians, Cornwall

 **11-17 July** -  
Farnborough  
International  
Airshow, Farnborough  
Aerodrome,  
Hampshire



**19<sup>th</sup>**

 **19 July** - The  
Scottish Horse  
Show, Royal  
Highland  
Showground,  
Edinburgh

**20<sup>th</sup>**

**21<sup>st</sup>**  
 **20-24  
July**  
- RHS Flower  
Show, Tatton  
Park, Cheshire

**22<sup>nd</sup>**

 **22-24 July** - The  
Garden Show at  
Loseley, Loseley Park,  
Surrey

 **22-24 July** - The  
UK Game Fair,  
Stoneleigh Park, Warks



**28<sup>th</sup>**

 **28 July** -  
Antiques  
Roadshow,  
New Lanark  
World Heritage  
Site, South  
Lanarkshire,  
Scotland

**29<sup>th</sup>**

 **29-31  
July** - The  
Game Fair, Ragley  
Hall, Alcester,  
Warwickshire


 **29-31 July** -  
Silverstone  
Classic, Silverstone  
Race Circuit,  
Northamptonshire

**30<sup>th</sup>**

 **30 July** -  
Woolley Horse  
Show, Woolley Edge,  
Wakefield

 **30 July-3 Aug**  
- Sidmouth  
Fringe Sessions,  
Salcombe Regis, Devon

**31<sup>st</sup>**

 **31 July** - Hay  
Horse Show,  
Show Field,  
Cusop, Hay  
on Wye,  
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# Celebrating British food

**Lorna Maybery** chats to **Miranda Gore Browne** about the Great British Food Festival

A CELEBRATION OF British food is taking place up and down the country this summer in the form of the Great British Food Festival. The festival is in praise of British food and is packed full of tasty treats, demonstrations, food challenges, baking and competitions, as well as live music and lots to do for the kids. Locations include Bowood House in Wiltshire and Kelmarsh Hall in Northamptonshire.

Celebrity chefs are lining up to appear at the festivals, including Great British Bake Off finalist Miranda Gore Browne, who will be demonstrating alongside fellow finalist Luis Troyano. Miranda, who appeared on the first series of Bake Off, is thrilled to be appearing at the festivals and is keen to get everyone baking.

"A lot of my baking is about quick and easy things and I'm quite evangelical about the fact that everyone can bake, you don't have to have particular skills, you just need to get on and do it," she says.

"I'm doing demonstrations at six of the different festival locations across the country and it's a lovely fit with Great British Bake Off. I will be doing some of my signature bakes, mainly cakes and biscuits."

Since Bake Off in 2011, Miranda has written two books, 'Biscuits' and 'Bake Me a Cake as Fast as You Can', has toured the country giving demonstrations and, more recently, set up a cookery school at her home.

She loves being at food festivals and passing on her baking knowledge.

"The lovely thing about food festivals is that people do have a bit more time to stand and think and listen. They might only listen for 20 minutes, but might go away with a couple of tips and decide to give baking a try."

You can see Miranda at the great British Food Festival, which are taking place in various locations around the country between now and September.

● For dates and ticket information, visit: [greatbritishfoodfestival.com](http://greatbritishfoodfestival.com)

## Four family tickets to give away!

We have four family tickets to give away to lucky readers - two for the Great British Food Festival at Kelmarsh Hall in Northamptonshire from 23-24 July, and two for the festival at Bowood House in Wiltshire, from 20-21 August.

For your chance to win a family ticket, simply send your full details, plus your choice of either Kelmarsh or Bowood, to Great British Food Festival Competition, c/o Heather Lewis, Countryside magazine, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire CV8 2TZ or email [heather.lewis@nfu.org.uk](mailto:heather.lewis@nfu.org.uk). Closing date is 10 July 2016.



## Have a go yourself

Try this lovely recipe from Miranda's latest book, 'Bake Me a Cake as Fast as You Can'.

### Dark Chocolate and Courgette Loaf with Fudge Icing

Baking time: 40-45 minutes

#### Ingredients

200g plain flour  
200g caster sugar  
80g cocoa powder  
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
½ tsp salt  
5 tbsp vegetable oil  
1 tsp vinegar (white wine or malt vinegar)

1 tsp vanilla extract  
250ml water  
150g raw courgettes, grated

#### For the icing

35g margarine  
2 tbsp cocoa powder  
2 tbsp boiling water  
180g icing sugar

#### Method

● Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F/Gas 4) and line a 2lb loaf tin with non-stick baking paper or use a loaf tin liner.

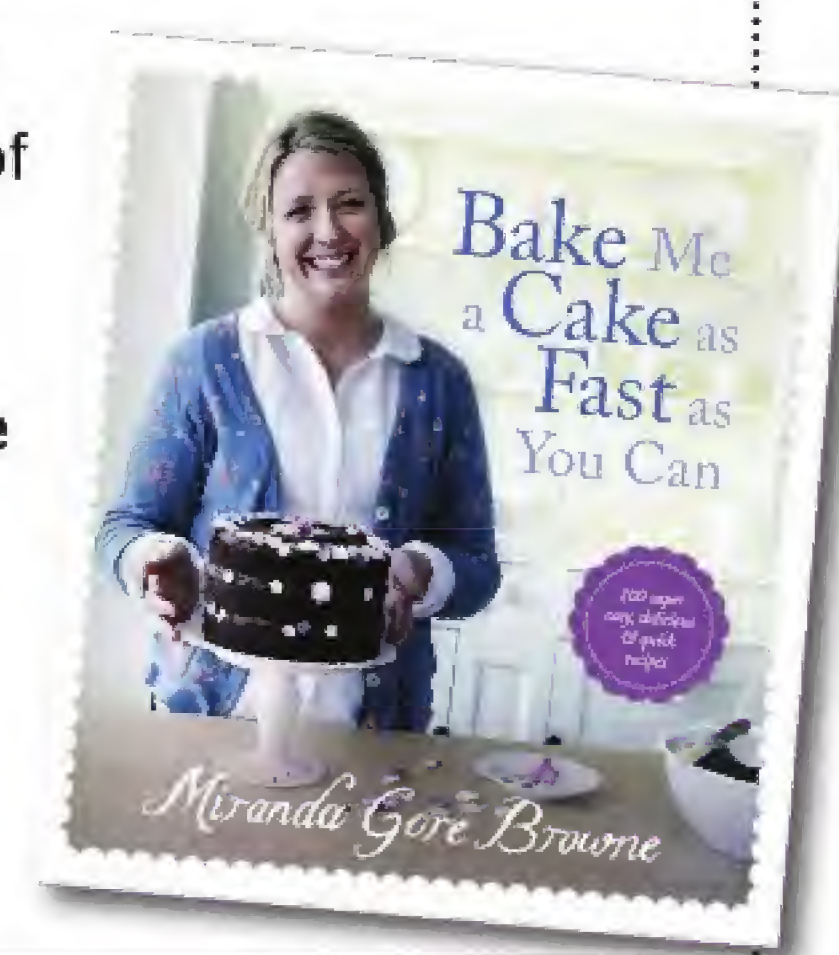
● Sift all the dry ingredients into a large bowl or whizz in a food processor to combine.

● Add the oil, vinegar, vanilla and water and mix well until everything is combined. Stir in the grated courgettes.

● Scrape into the prepared tin and bake in the preheated oven for about 40-45 minutes, or until a skewer comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin.

● To make the icing place the margarine, cocoa powder and water in a bowl and melt gently in the microwave or in a small pan over a low heat. Stir in the icing sugar and mix well until smooth. Spread a generous layer on the top of the cooled cake.

● Extracted from 'Bake Me a Cake as Fast as You Can' by Miranda Gore Browne (Ebury Press, £14.99) Photography by Rosie Barnett





# Toast of the country

**Lorna Maybery** is on the trail of some great British booze and raises a glass to three very different farm diversifications



**Words by:**  
**Lorna Maybery**  
Lorna is Countryside's deputy editor who loves being in the great outdoors

## The English Whisky Company

**F**OR GENERATIONS, the Nelstrops have successfully farmed land in the east of England. But James Nelstrop had a dream to make whisky, and so, with the help of his son, Andrew, the Norfolk farmers swapped tractors and grain stores for stills and barrels and became the first people in more than 100 years to make English whisky.

Andrew now runs the English Whisky Company after his father, James, sadly passed away, and it has turned into not only a successful long-term business, but also a popular tourist attraction.

"My father had always had this lifetime ambition to make whisky," says Andrew. "I was farming in Lincolnshire and every year he'd bring it up. Then he turned 60 and we finally said, well do as you like!

"The original plan was to build a micro-distillery producing enough whisky for himself, his mates and a few local pubs, as a retirement

project. Very luckily for us, back in 2005 UK Customs and Excise had some fairly specific rules that said if you're going to build a distillery it had to be bigger than a certain size and this totally ruled out the micro-distillery idea.

"So we had to make the decision that if we couldn't go small we had to go big. We built something to fit the rules. You can make a whisky in a shed, but if you're doing it in a big way, you want to let people in to see what you do, so you need a nice big building, hence St Georges was built. We became the first registered whisky distillery in England for more than a century."

Andrew says that the business has turned out differently to how they envisaged it, with the tourism side taking them by surprise. Also, the death of his father was a huge shock, but Andrew knows his father was proud of their achievement.

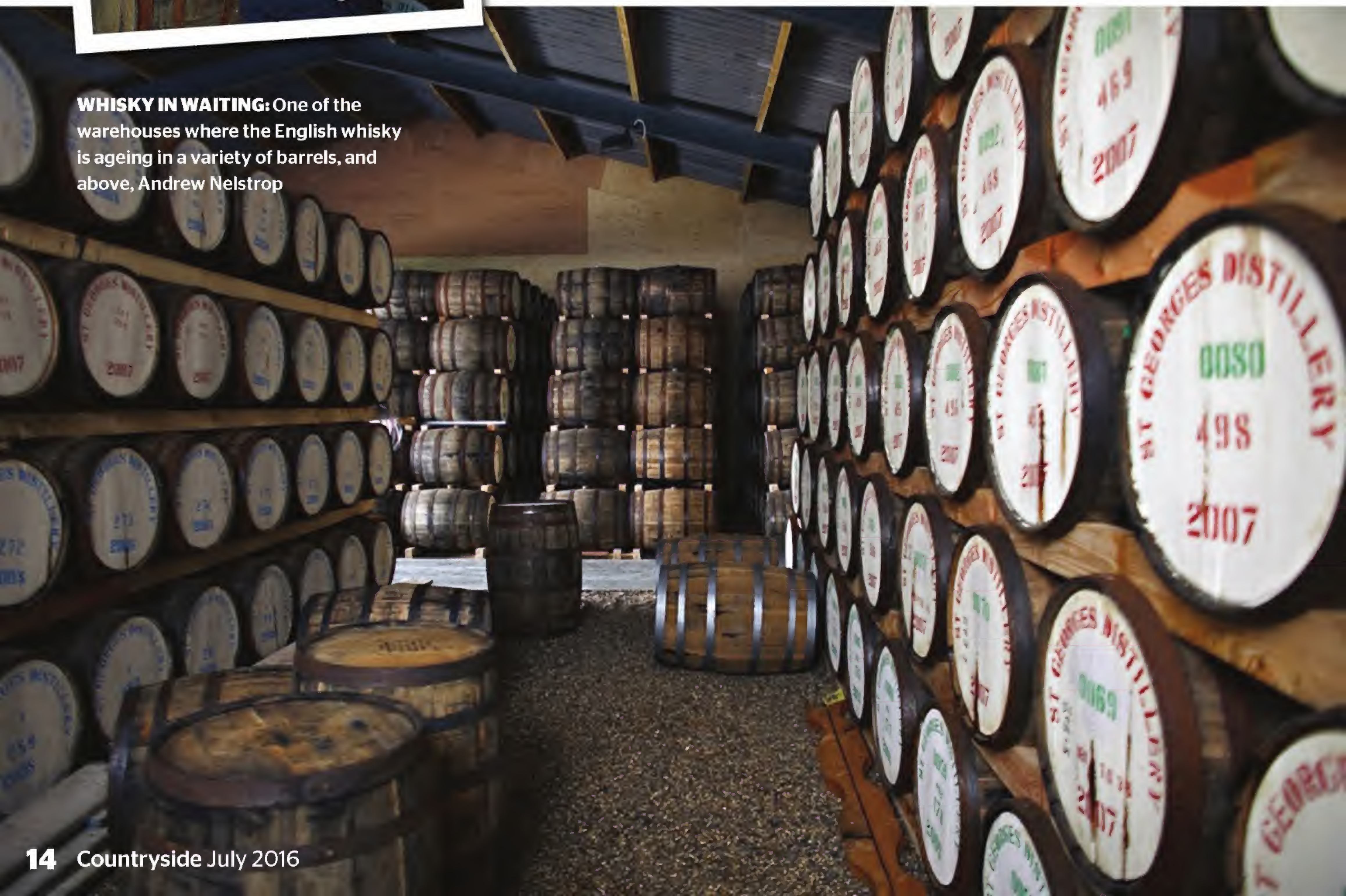
"He was quite chuffed he'd seen it set up and the English Whisky brand go worldwide to 14 different countries."

Andrew says their original plan has now evolved into two rather different businesses.

"We have one that makes really good single malt whisky and the other is the tourism business. We



**WHISKY IN WAITING:** One of the warehouses where the English whisky is ageing in a variety of barrels, and above, Andrew Nelstrop







are open to the public seven days a week with about 50,000 visitors a year coming through the door. This really surprised us.”

The distillery offers daily tours and tastings to promote the brand and to help people understand how it's made.

“It's a lot easier to sell something to someone if they're on-site here,” says Andrew.

Making whisky has been a steep learning curve for the family, but right from the start they were determined to do it properly and employed Ian Henderson, the world-renowned former head brewer at Laphroaig, who had recently retired.

“He got the kit installed properly and fired up the stills and set the style of whisky we would make and then spent the next six months training up our current head distiller David Fitt,” says Andrew.

Apart from yeast, there are two main ingredients in whisky: barley and water. The north Norfolk coastal area is perfect for growing barley, while the whole area around the distillery, known as the Brecklands, sits on a chalk aquifer and is one of England's largest fresh water supplies. The farm was able to sink a borehole at the distillery.

“The joy of it coming out of the ground is it always comes out at a consistent temperature of 10 degrees, which is perfect for whisky.”

As well as the quality of the barley and the water, a vital factor in the style and taste of whisky is the barrel in which it's aged. Under EU legislation, the clear liquid that comes out of the still is known as British plain spirit and it must be stored in wood for three years to be classified as whisky.

Andrew explains: “We tend to use bourbon casks. They're beautiful casks, and they're consistent, so we buy those from Jim Beam. We also use a lot of sherry casks, which is a very traditional way of making whisky. Then we have a whole series of other casks, from rum to Madeira.”

The distillery started in 2006 so Andrew now has 10-year-old whisky, but this is still relatively young in whisky terms.

“We have a plan that goes forward to 2056 to make sure that we have old matured whisky left and don't sell it. You're laying down whisky that might be there for 50 years.”

The distillery could make five times the amount it's currently producing, which is the equivalent of about 150,000 bottles a year.

“I think we would rather do it well and do it ourselves than just churn it out, which probably means we'll never be billionaires, but we are happy making a great English product.”



## Further information

The English Whisky Co, St George's Distillery,  
Harling Road, Roudham, Norfolk NR16 2QW

Visit: [englishwhisky.co.uk](http://englishwhisky.co.uk)

Tel: 01953 717939



## Wyken Vineyards

**E**NGLISH WINE used to be the poor relation to wines from Europe and further afield – but not any more.

The fertile lands of southern Britain are proving the ideal growing medium for a wide variety of grapes, and English wine growers are now winning awards and growing their reputation for producing world-beating wines.

One such vineyard is Wyken, in Suffolk, which started out as a small farm diversification and is now a thriving wine growing and restaurant business.

The vineyard is owned by Sir Kenneth and Lady Carla Carlisle and it was the idea of Carla to plant the vines back in 1988.

Growing up on a farm in Mississippi, Carla, a freelance writer, was no stranger to farming and came to realise that if their 1,000-acre estate was to remain economically viable, they needed to find something else to grow on part of the land.

“I always thought we needed to diversify and my philosophy is you must to do something you believe in and love. I knew and had written about wine and cared about it and we had a south-facing slope with sandy loam over chalk so all that was perfect,” she explains.

Around 12,000 vines were planted on seven acres of their land. The planting and trellising was researched quite carefully and, along with an expert, Carla chose the style of wines she wanted to grow.

She says: “I chose mainly French varieties, although our best wine that wins the prizes is a Bachhus, a German mix which makes a wonderful sauvignon blanc-style wine for us.

“I was also determined to make a red wine and that was great one year, then not great for two years in a row, so I've given up on that! We do make a Wyken Pink though. Rosè is so popular and its easier on the cashflow and on the anxiety levels than red.

“We also produce a Wyken Moonshine, which is a sparkling wine, and is a big success. When you've got French vineyards buying up hundreds of English apple orchards to plant grapevines to make sparkling wine you know that the future of British viniculture is safe. I make my sparkling wine with auxerrois and pinot noir grapes, that's my blend. It tastes just like champagne. I'm very proud of it.”

Carla is involved in every stage of production, from discussing with the vineyard manager about when to pick the grapes, to tasting the wine to ensure the blending is correct. The wine making and bottling is done down the road at Shawsgate in Framlingham.

“In the empty part of the barn where the shop is now we had planning permission to put in a winery,” says Carla. “Thank goodness we didn't.”





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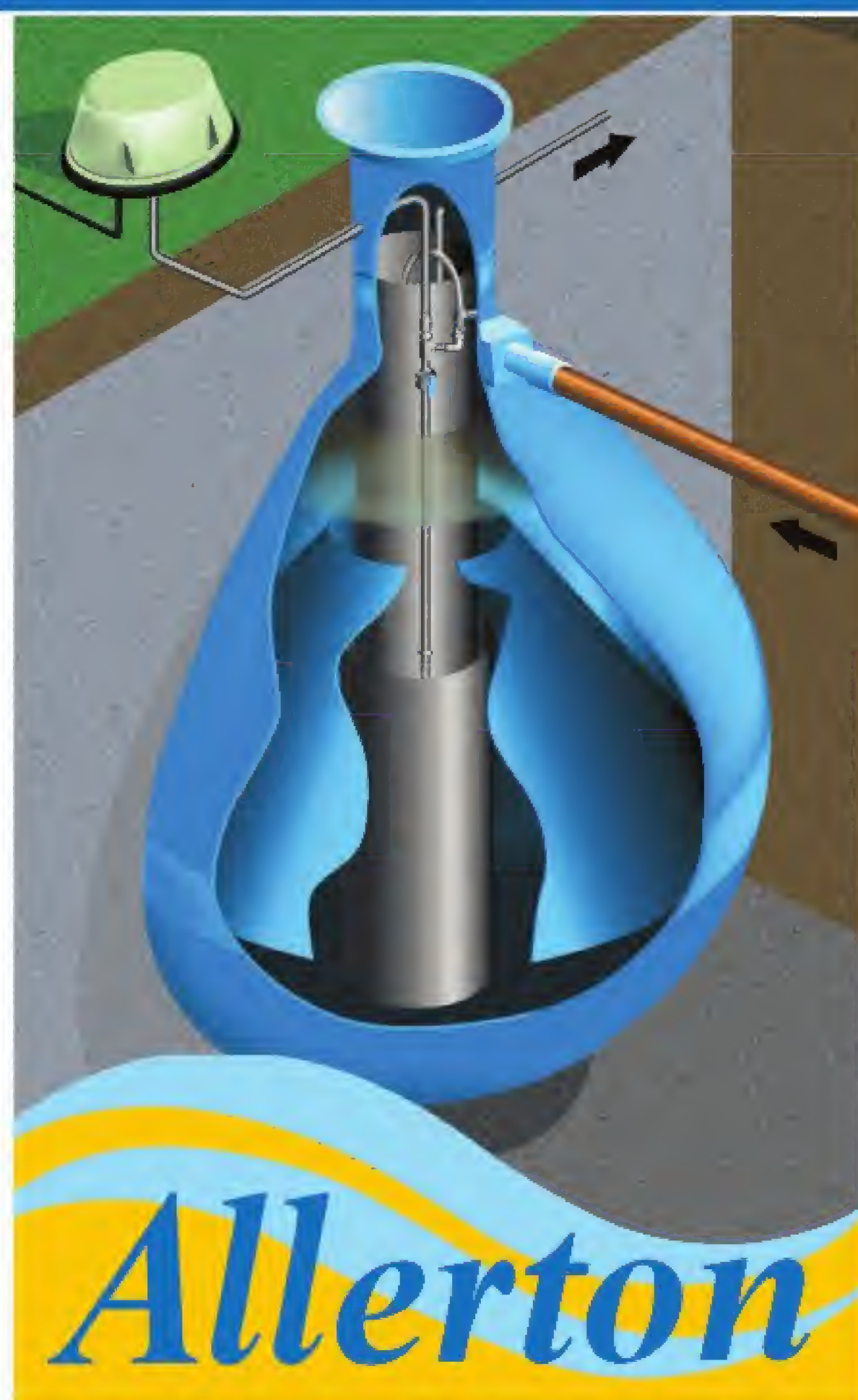


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There was a winery at Framlingham that was overcapitalised for the acreage of wine in that area so we invested in that instead and it's worked out very well."

But there's more to the vineyard business than wine. While Carla was waiting for her grapes to establish, she turned her attention to food.

"After all the research, endeavour and investment, you have three years to wait so we had time to recover from what we'd done and give thought to converting our large 400-year-old barn into the Leaping Hare restaurant."

It initially opened on just Thursdays and Sundays serving good simple food, but, after a couple of years, it was clear this wasn't enough and Carla opened a café alongside the restaurant and also a shop where they could sell their wine, and the business is now open seven days a week.

Carla is passionate about provenance and the menu is carefully sourced to ensure food is as local and as tasty as possible. The venison and lamb is from their estate and the fish is sourced from just a few miles away. There's also a popular farmers' market held on site every Saturday.

The business employs around 50 people, all from the local area. "We have virtually no staff turnover," says Carla.

"We were able to evolve piecemeal and, I have to say, if I was speaking on the subject of diversification I would urge people not to think they could do it all at once.

"We spread it out and in the beginning the farm paid for converting the barn and planting the vineyard. We did go with a proposal for a small loan to the bank and the manager said 'but you're nothing and in the middle of nowhere'.

"On that encouraging note we were determined to make it happen and over time we have achieved that and more."

## Further information

Wyken Vineyards, Wyken Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 2DW

Visit: [wykenvineyards.co.uk](http://wykenvineyards.co.uk)



## HAVE YOUR SAY

Do you have a favourite tippie? Tell us what it is and why you love it. Email: [lorna.maybery@nfu.org.uk](mailto:lorna.maybery@nfu.org.uk)



## Halletts Real Cider

**N**ESTLED IN the heart of Caerphilly in Wales is a small farm where big things are happening. Andy and Ann Hallett are celebrating after their Halletts Real Cider was crowned the UK's Best Drinks Producer in the Radio 4 Food and Farming Awards in April.

The award is the icing on the cake for a venture that started with the purchase of a smallholding with lots of sheds and very little idea of what they could be used for.

Ann Hallett explains: "My husband Andy and I used to live in Cardiff, but about 15 years ago we decided to move out of the city and we found a farm with 25 acres and lots of sheds and buildings. It took us a couple of years to work out what we were going to do with all these.

"Andy's always made wine and beer at a home, but he's a cider drinker. Someone we met locally happened to get a pile of apples given to him and asked if he could come up and press them in one of our sheds. Andy did it for him and made a couple of hundred litres, and it turned out really well, so he thought this might be the thing to do.

"Over the next couple of years he learned much more about cider making, did the courses and we invested about five years ago to move from making 7,000 litres to 70,000 litres."

Andy, pictured below, is an engineer by trade and worked in the food industry so he had the knowledge and skill to be able to build the processing plant and make it suitable for a one-man operation.

"We bought the 5,000-litre stainless steel tanks, and got a filter, a pasturiser and a press, but Andy set up a production line that links all these together, which minimises the manual effort involved."

Ann says that Halletts Real Cider is not what you imagine farm cider to be. "We make a very clear and clean drink, it's not scrumpy by any means."

Some of the cider is keeved, a traditional way of making cider, and this is also used as a sweetening agent. Nothing is added to the cider, which is made from 100 per cent apples and 100 per cent juice.

The cider making on the farm forms part of an overall business plan that includes a farmhouse that's rented out, visitor tours of the cider making sheds, and also a bunkhouse.

Ann says: "We do farmgate sales and people come up all the time and are fascinated by the fact that our lovely cider that comes out of the sheds here is the quality it is." 🍷

## Further information

Blaengawney Farm, Mynydd Maen, Hafodyrynys, Crumlin, Caerphilly, NP11 5AY

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# A cut above the rest?

Looking for a cut of meat with a difference? You're in luck, as there are many lesser-known cuts that fit the bill, as **Guy Whitmore** discovers

**S**HOPPERS DEMANDING more unusual cuts of meat could mean better meals for consumers, greater profits for processors, and more security for farmers.

That's according to Mike Whittemore, head of trade marketing at the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), who believes there's an opportunity to add more value to carcasses by increasing the amount of higher value cuts.

While he stresses that no part of a carcass will go to waste, he explains that more than half of it is used to produce mincemeat.

"There's nothing wrong with meat being turned into mince," he says. "It's used for staples such as burgers, meatballs, spaghetti bolognese etc. But the fundamental thing here is you could better harvest the carcass, which would add value for the retailer, the processor and the farmer."

In recent years, he says, there have been a number of examples of parts of the carcass that would previously have gone into mince becoming a much-prized cut of meat.

One such cut is the flat iron steak, which was pioneered six years ago in America, and comes from the shoulder block of cattle.

In the past, if it hadn't ended up as mince, it would have been sold as a braising meat, but now it's sold as frying steak, adding another £3-£4 per

kilo per cut. But the most surprising aspect of the meat, adds Mike, is that it comes from the front section of the animal, an area traditionally linked with poorer quality cuts.

"It's a heavy muscle that does a lot of work, and yet it's the fourth most tender," he continues. "If you butcher it correctly and take the centre gristle out, it has a really good flavour, and while it's not tough, it does have a chew."

Other cuts he points to that could add value to carcasses include the tri-tip from a beef carcass's rump tail and the Denver cut. The latter comes from near the shoulder blade, a part of the carcass known as the chuck.

But to increase knowledge and customer take-up of the cuts, adds Mike, there needs to be a change in attitude by retailers and processors.

"They do a good job but need to do better," he says. "Retailers need to be more consumer focused, and think what the customer wants, not what the factories are geared to produce."

One way consumers can get hold of more unusual cuts he explains, is to shop at a local butcher. This not only provides greater choice, it also increases the chances of buying British.

"Not all have just British, as some will import," says Mikes, "but visit a good local butcher, and the majority of his range will be British or sourced from the local area."



**Words by:**  
**Guy Whitmore**  
Guy loves walking in the countryside with his dogs and has a strong interest in farming and rural affairs



PICTURE: ALAMY





## 5 questions to ask your butcher

Want to find a lesser-known, quality cut? A good start is to visit a local butcher who will be happy to advise you on what is available and within your budget. Here are five key questions to ask your butcher.

### 1. Which cut of meat is best for the job?

Don't know which cut of meat is the best for you? Your butcher will know which of the dozens of options available is best, and can ensure you get the right cut of meat to suit your budget.

### 2. How much do I need?

Simply tell your butcher how many people you're feeding and they'll give you an idea of how much you need, which can be more cost-effective as you only buy what you need.

### 3. Is it British?

Labels on pre-packed meat make it easier to know where it has come from, and, if you buy Red Tractor labelled food when shopping at a supermarket, you know it's come from a UK farm. But don't forget to ask the butcher the origin of the meat they are selling. Most have good relationships with the farms they buy from and will be happy to tell you all about them.

### 4. What's the best way to cook it?

Butchers are a great source of knowledge when it comes to explaining about the less common, but tasty cuts of meat. And don't be afraid to ask your butcher for some cooking tips – you could end up with a new favourite dish!

### 5. Can you prepare it?

From de-boning to butterflying, most butchers are more than happy to help prepare the meat for you. If you want to do it yourself, they can point you in the right direction and give you tips on what to do.

- For more information on making the most of your local butcher, visit the Back British Farming pages at: [nfonline.com](http://nfonline.com)



## Recipes ideas

Fancy making a tasty dish using a lesser-known cut? Here are couple of ideas courtesy of the AHDB.



### Griddled pork steaks with passion fruit salsa

Serves 2

#### Ingredients

2 pork shoulder steaks

1 ripe passion fruit (look for crinkly skins)

1 ripe peach

1tbsp sweet chilli sauce

2tbsp fresh coriander (optional)

#### Method

- Cut one passion fruit in half, scoop

### Rustic lamb chunkies with lemon and parsley butter

Serves 4

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: up to 35 minutes

#### Ingredients

4 small lamb chunkies

Salt and freshly milled black pepper

**For the lemon and parsley butter:**

100g/4oz unsalted butter, softened

Grated zest of 2 lemons

60ml/4tbsp freshly chopped flat-leaf parsley

#### Method

- Prepare lemon and parsley butter by mixing all the ingredients together. Form into a sausage shape, wrap in cling film or foil, and chill until required.
- Preheat the oven to Gas mark 5, 190°C, 375°F. Place each chunkie on a large foil square, loosely seal and transfer to a baking tray. Cook in the oven for 25-30 minutes (for medium).
- Remove the chunkies from the oven,

out seeds and flesh – sieve pulp if you prefer not to use the seeds. Add one ripe peach or favourite ripe fruit that's in season, finely sliced, as well as the sweet chilli sauce and the fresh coriander and mix together.

- Cook two shoulder steaks on a preheated griddle or grill for 8-10 minutes per side.
- Serving suggestion. Serve with stir-fried pak choi and asparagus, salsa and thick noodles or creamy Dauphinoise potatoes.



open each parcel and put a small disk of the butter in the centre. Loosely seal and continue to cook for a further 5 minutes.

- Remove the chunkies from each parcel and transfer to a plate, spoon over the lemon and parsley butter and serve with a cucumber and mint rice salad.
- The recipe works well on the barbecue too. Simply pop each foil parcel directly onto the barbecue and cook for 25-30 minutes, unwrap each parcel, and put a disk of butter in the centre, loosely seal and continue to cook for a further 5 minutes.



# SEE YOU THERE...



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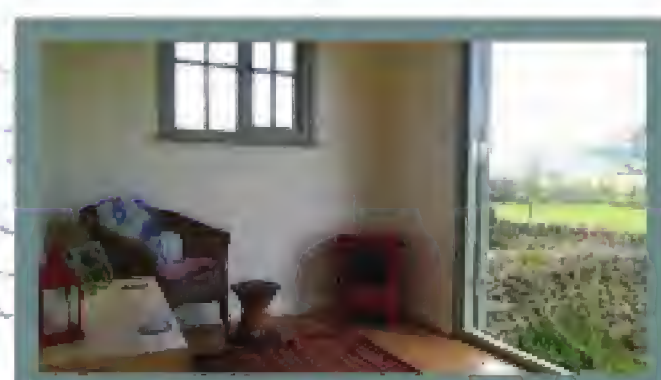
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# Sweet dreams

**Gemma Bower** travels the country in search of rural businesses that are more sugar than spice



## Words by:

**Gemma Bower**

Gemma is a graduate trainee at the NFU and has a real love for food and farming

## NomNom

It's hard to believe that deep in the hills of Wales a young team of eight people are hand-making 1,000 bars of glorious chocolate per day in a cowshed.

Yes, that's right. At just 22-years-old, Liam Burgess, the cheeky chappy behind the brand NomNom, is running a successful luxury chocolate business from a cowshed using local producers and growers where possible.

Liam grew up in the Welsh village of Llanboidy in Carmarthenshire, an area where the dairy industry has struggled but has undeniably left its mark. It's been Liam's mission to get all the sons and daughters of past dairy farmers to remain on-farm by creating a company that works with local growers to produce quality products in the heart of the countryside.

Growing up, school wasn't really Liam's thing, as he says himself, so he went on to work in restaurant kitchens where he found himself training with French chef Ludovic Dieumegard. This is what inspired him to make the most of the local produce being grown around him.

**ENTREPRENEUR:** At just 22-years-old, Liam Burgess has established his own chocolate business



"I couldn't hold down jobs for very long, I think the longest I ever worked somewhere was about three months, so, after trying about 10 different places, I thought, well this isn't going to work so I thought, 'what about chocolate?'" Liam says.

Setting up in a caravan at the bottom of his mum's garden, Liam experimented with different flavours of chocolate; from hazelnut to more quirky ideas using local beetroot, parsnip and even mustard.

However, it didn't quite begin there, at just







10 years old, Liam already had an entrepreneurial streak. “For part of my childhood, I grew up next to Cadbury’s chocolate factory in Bourneville, where the whole village smelt like chocolate,” Liam explains.

“The whole thing with chocolate started when my grandad gave me £50 to spend in the Cadbury’s staff shop where they sold discounted cases of chocolate. I returned to Wales with cases and cases of the stuff and set up a little shop underneath the stairs and sold it to friends before school.”

Realising that he was destined to go into the trade, Liam went to the Prince’s Trust where they offered him £3,000 to help him get started, and he’s now running a very successful chocolate business.

So how did he come to making his chocolate in a cow shed? “I used to go and help the farmer over the road from my mum when I was much younger and he only ever paid me in digestive biscuits, so I said, ‘one day I’ll have you for this’, and so, as my chocolates took off in the teeny kitchen, Phil the farmer, agreed to convert the cow shed for us,” says Liam, and the rest is history.

With a team of creative and talented young people, NomNom has strong links with the local growers around them.

“The inspiration that started our chocolate in the first place was the amazing produce that we’re surrounded by in West Wales,” explains Liam “so

we try and use as much local produce as we can.”

NomNom has 14 different flavours, which change seasonally. Currently, they’re using local raspberries to make a quirky vodka and raspberry flavour chocolate for the summer, and Wendy Brandon, who is a neighbour, provides NomNom with plums from her plum tree, as well as supplying them with her homemade marmalade for Liam’s favourite marmalade chocolate bar flavour.

Wales’ own Penderyn whisky featured in the chocolate bars at Christmas time, and later this summer, blueberry gin-flavoured bars will be launched.

The chocolate bars are sold to independent shops, farm shops and delis across the country. Liam plans to move his chocolate factory into the former site of the now-closed Pemberton’s Chocolate Farm later this year, which happens to be over the road from Farmer Phil’s cow shed.

However, one thing is for sure, NomNom’s roots will always reside with farming and will continue to support its local producers.

● [nomnom.cymru](http://nomnom.cymru)

**DARK DELIGHT:**  
Chocolate is made and packaged in the cow shed of a farm in Llanboidy

**GREAT MARKETING:**  
NomNom’s chocolate bars are given evocative names such as Lust





## Laura's Fudge

**L**aura Jackson, a young countrywoman from Yorkshire, has taken her dream and made it a reality. At just 23 years old, she's gone from experimenting with a few different recipes in her grandma's kitchen to being the proud owner of a luxurious hand-made fudge business 'Laura's Fudge.'

Laura, who sits pride of place in her newly-opened confectionery shop located in Yorkshire Wildlife Park, hands me a good old Yorkshire brew and a helping of delicious creamy fudge and tells me how she's got to where she is now.

"It all started back in 2012 around my mum's kitchen table. I've always had a passion for baking and all things sweet and, at first, I wanted to earn some extra cash while at university."

Alongside her business studies degree, Laura was keen to take her homemade fudge to the local market at the weekends. With some previous experience of working on market stalls, she contacted Beverley Town Council and started attending Saturday markets selling her homemade produce and soon realised her confectionery had huge potential.

As her business began to grow, so did the production of her fudge, and it became apparent that she couldn't quite make all of it herself. With more than 25 different flavours, including strawberries and cream, peanut butter, Baileys, and stem ginger to name a few, the fudge is now made in special, traditional confectionery mixers and then handset by a small local team.

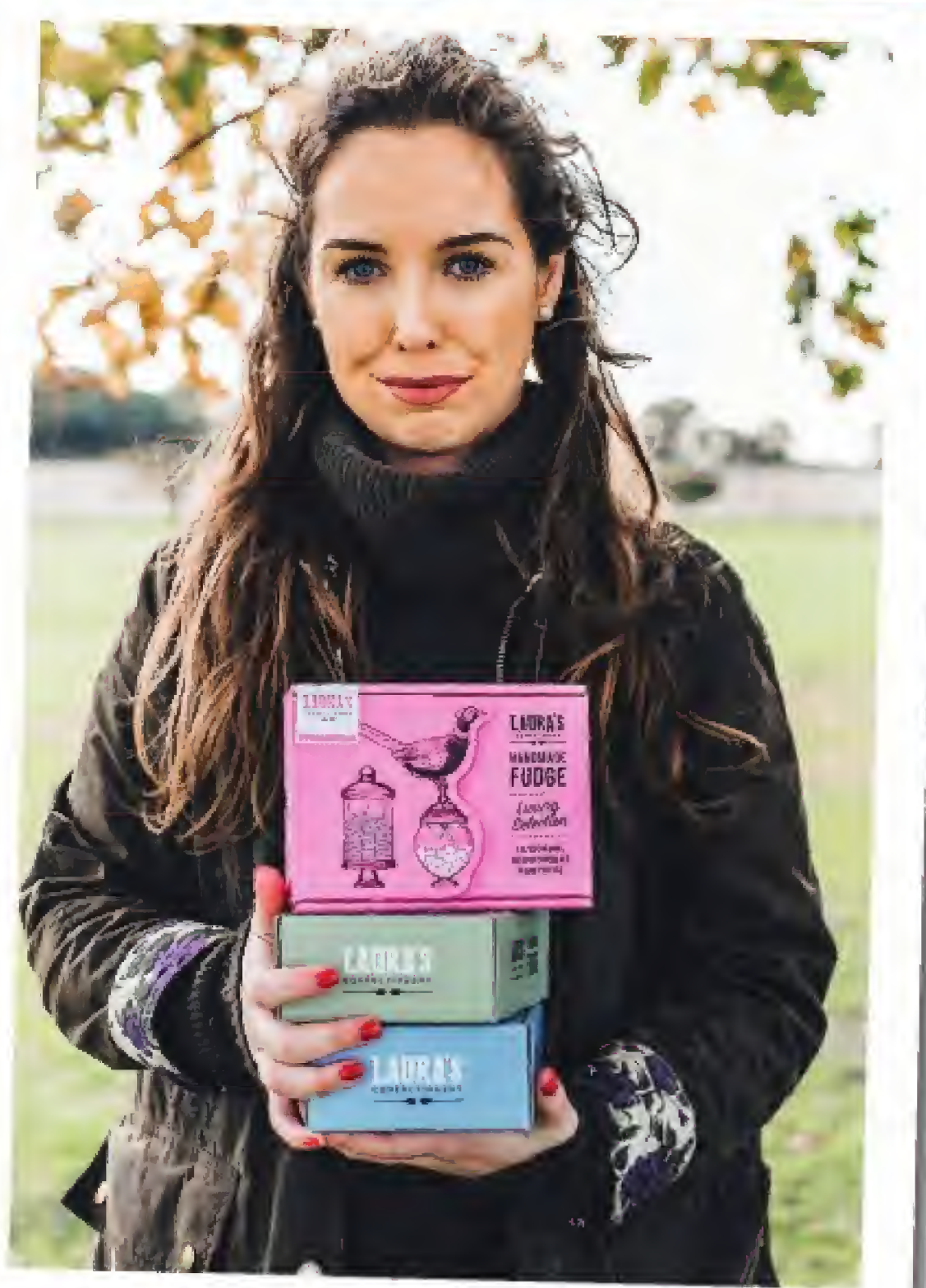
"The ingredients are sourced from across the UK, and our manufacturers support British sugar farmers greatly. We like to source local for our seasonal fudge, such as Yorkshire rhubarb and local clotted cream," says Laura.

Having grown up in the countryside, Laura has reflected this in her branding. "My uncle is a gamekeeper and every school holiday we would be on the train up to Perthshire where I would help out with the game; I absolutely adored it!"

"This is where the pheasant idea comes from for my logo; it represents the nostalgic background of my life, my close-knit family and our love for the British countryside."



**RURAL BRANDING:** The pheasant logo reflects Laura's love of the countryside



Laura's Fudge has gone from strength to strength. Having attended some of the UK's most prestigious food events, including the BBC Good Food Show, the business now has huge brand recognition, as well as a good customer following.

And now Laura runs her very own confectionery shop, which opened earlier this year and is located in the Safari Village just before entering the Yorkshire Wildlife Park in Doncaster. It offers a vast range of Laura's signature fudge, as well as every sweet you could possibly think of.

And that's not all, the shop also has its very own chocolate fountain, for which Laura takes the majority of her fresh produce from her partner, Ryan, who is a fourth generation greengrocer.

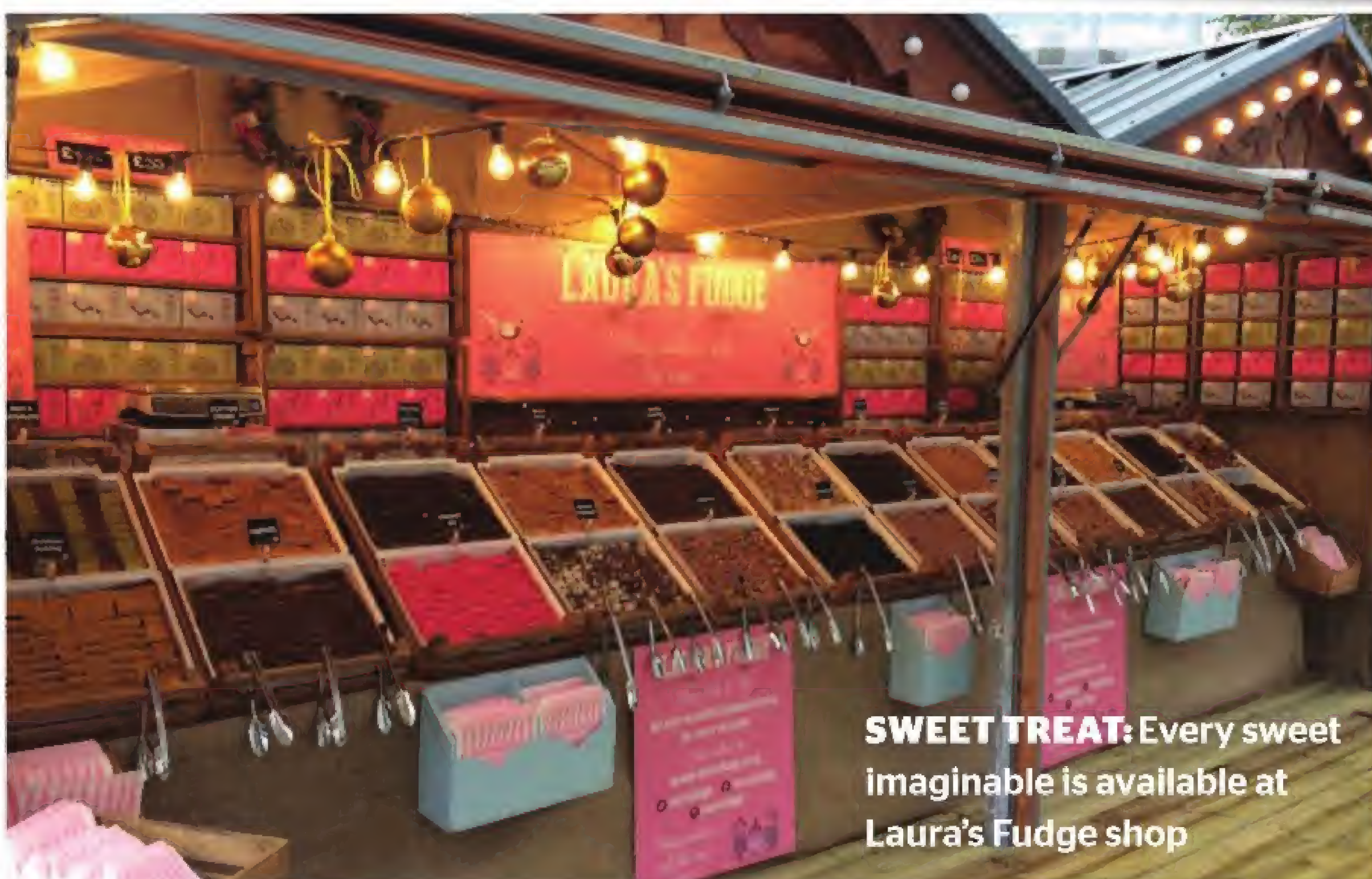
"Ryan has been amazing, we find ourselves working together a lot; anything I need fresh produce wise, I get from Ryan, who gets his goods from local farmers; however, he's now banned from the shop for eating too many toffee bonbons!"

If you meet Laura, it's no surprise that she's got to where she is now, as she's bubbly and warm-hearted with a huge passion and determination.

"Our plan for the future is to open a few more shops around the UK. We would love to be a household name – now I'm dreaming big!"

Laura's Fudge can be found at Great British Food Festival – Shugbrough House, 9-10 July, the VW Festival – Harewood House Leeds, 12-14 August and Chatsworth Country Fair, 2-4 September.

● [laurasfudge.co.uk](http://laurasfudge.co.uk)



**SWEET TREAT:** Every sweet imaginable is available at Laura's Fudge shop





## Summerdown Mint

**H**is family is best known for making Britain's iconic Colman's Mustard, but Sir Michael Colman has moved on from condiments to reviving the once lost peppermint industry.

Sir Michael, now in his 80s, is a man with a whole lot of passion and determination. After spending the majority of his life working for the family firm, retirement saw him itching to re-introduce a crop that hasn't been commercially grown in the UK for more than 50 years.

"We had a reputation in this country for growing the best quality essential oil peppermint in the world, and it was based on a particular variety known as Black Mitcham, which was grown in Mitcham in Surrey," says Sir Michael.

However, the practice of growing peppermint was both labour-intensive and expensive, and the First and Second World Wars saw the crop dwindle and die out, he explains.

Sir Michael inherited Summerdown Farm when his late father passed away in 1961. However, it wasn't until his retirement that he moved to the farm full-time, and joined forces with a group of Hampshire farmers to form a co-operative.

Despite not knowing much about farming, Sir Michael was appointed director for his business know-how and the farmers began to grow vining peas across their shared 3,000 acres for 20 years, before Sir Michael took the plunge into peppermint.

However, growing peppermint proved to be harder than it looked. "The first challenge was growing it and distilling it," explains Sir Michael "It was a huge learning curve in understanding the plant."

With the help of farm manager Ian Margetts, they both re-learned lost farming skills after taking a few trips to America where the peppermint industry is thriving. Sir Michael then set aside 80 acres of his 2,000-acre land dedicated to growing Black Mitcham peppermint, and, after a number of years of trial and error, Summerdown Farm now produces 20kg of oil per acre.

The distillery based at the farm is home to impressive state-of-the-art distillation equipment imported from America.

The peppermint leaves and stems arrive directly from the field and are then heated up, and slowly

cooked in large containers for more than three hours.

"You have to have a sensitive distillation plant where you can manage the temperature, which is the key thing, being able to manage the steam temperature," says Sir Michael, which is why it's taken a number of years to perfect the end result that's pure quality peppermint oil.

Some of the oil produced on Summerdown Farm is sold to food producers, while the remaining oil is used in Sir Michael's very own confections and award-winning beauty products.

It's clear to see that Sir Michael is very proud of his range of confectionery delights. Peppermint creams were the first to be launched to the market, followed by peppermint chocolate crisps, peppermint chocolate thins, chocolate mini-bars, and heritage peppermints made with rich 70% dark chocolate.

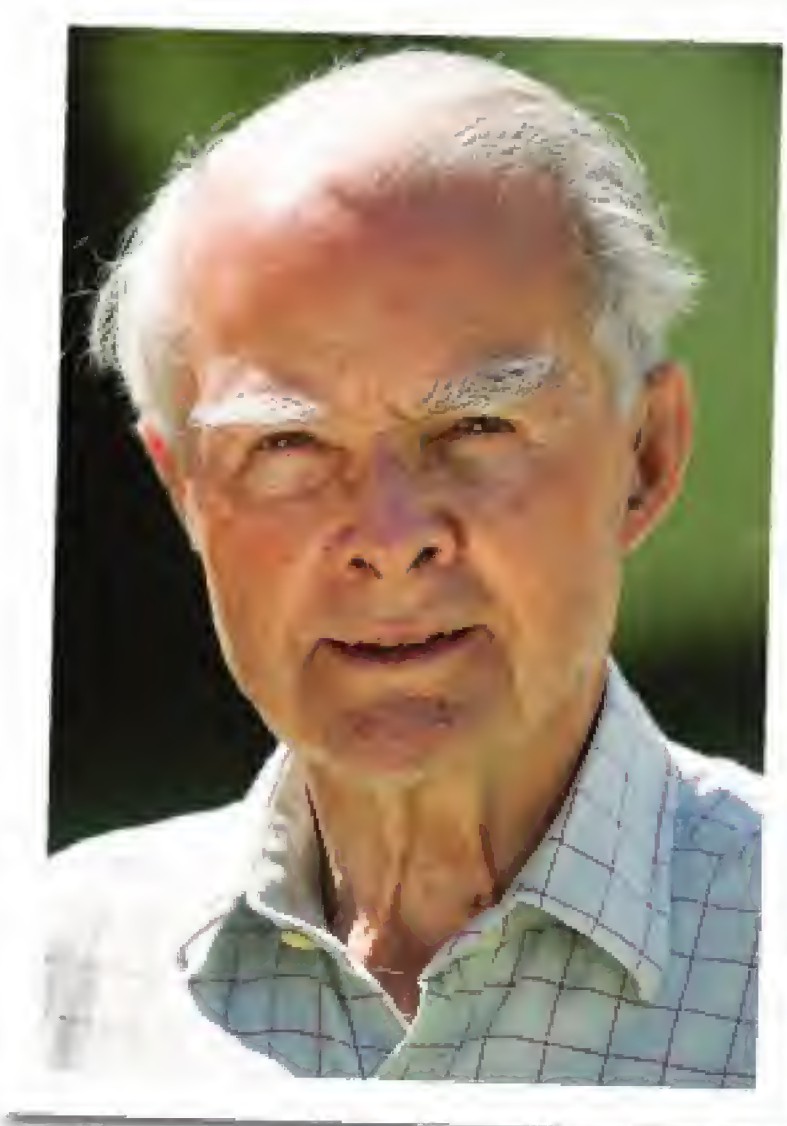
All of the products have been awarded Great Taste Awards for the rich, dark chocolate which is exquisitely flavoured with the pure English peppermint oil, a taste that has been lost from the UK for more than 50 years.

"Our peppermint sweets are made from just glucose, peppermint oil and water," explains Sir Michael "giving you a pure, refreshingly cool taste of the peppermint that's grown on Summerdown Farm."

As well as the award-winning chocolates and beauty products, Summerdown Mint also produces award-winning super-premium English blend peppermint tea.

"I could sell soft drinks, there's scope for that. But why don't I do it? Well, to be honest with you, I have enough on my plate!" Sir Michael laughs. 🍴

● [summerdownmint.com](http://summerdownmint.com)



**FOOD PIONEER:**  
Sir Michael Colman has revived the peppermint growing industry in England

**TASTE OF THE PAST:**  
Summerdown Farm produces a wide range of peppermint products





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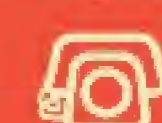
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# The saving of Fordhall Farm

**Gemma Bower** talks to the siblings whose creative thinking brought their farm back from the brink

**C**HARLOTTE AND Ben Hollins find it hard to believe that, 10 years ago, their farm and childhood home was on the verge of disappearing.

It was only their determination and creative thinking that turned Fordhall Farm's fortunes around and saw it becoming Britain's first community-owned farm. It was a concept that many people were sceptical about.

"When you're young, everything is an adventure. People were telling us we couldn't do it, it was stupid, we were wasting our time," says Charlotte. But the pair had an idyllic life growing up on the farm, which had been in the family for four generations, and were not prepared to lose it all.

"Growing up at Fordhall was a privilege," says Charlotte, "we would spend our days playing in the fields – mum and dad would never really know where we were, but they knew we were safe."

However, this idyllic life was threatened when it looked likely that their landlord would sell the farm to Muller Dairies.

At just 21 and 19-years-old at the time, Charlotte and Ben took on the running of Fordhall Farm, securing a short-term 18-month tenancy back in 2004. After their father passed away, they were determined to bring their home back to life. With

just 11 cows, six pigs and six sheep, Charlotte and Ben knew they had a long way to go to revive their much-loved farm.

Within a few weeks, they had their first farm shop up and running. "To us, the £50 a weekend we were turning over was a huge achievement, but we understood that it needed to grow and fast," explains Charlotte. "We knew that selling direct to the public was the way to secure our business for the future."

Their solution was crowd-funding, where hundreds of individuals buy small stakes in a business. This groundbreaking idea captured the imagination of the public and their campaign to save Fordhall became one of the first projects of its kind, selling shares to the community. This soon attracted the support from the Prince of Wales, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Sting, and from people across the world.

"Through our willingness to open the farm gate and engage with the community, we found that doors began to open and hope was on the horizon."

Months of community consultation and, with the option to purchase the farm for £800,000 in the six months remaining of their tenancy, Fordhall Community Land Initiative was created, selling £50 non-profit making shares to the community.



**Words by:  
Gemma Bower**

Gemma is a graduate trainee at the NFU and has a real love for food and farming

**SECURE FUTURE:** Ben and Charlotte, with Charlotte's daughter Katherine, a new generation to help run Fordhall farm





## Learn more at the Community Business Weekend

Charlotte and Ben are now eager to encourage other farmers and businesses, from all sectors, to involve the community in their ventures. In celebration of their 10th anniversary as the first community-owned business, Fordhall Farm will join forces with more than 5,000 businesses across the UK to promote the positive impact community businesses have on the local economy.

"There are a lot of community businesses under the radar, we're asking people to shout about the fact they are community owned," says Charlotte. "The more they shout about it the more it will filter into every aspect of life."

The Community Business Weekend is being supported by the lottery-funded community business charity Power to Change, and will take place from 2-3 July.

Fordhall Farm will be holding an open day on 2 July to give people an opportunity to learn about the community structure and the community benefits it can deliver. More information can be found at: [fordhallfarm.com/events](http://fordhallfarm.com/events)

"The response from the public was overwhelming," says Charlotte. "Our office was filled with volunteers working tirelessly, every day of the week, and even through the night to help us reach our deadline in time."

"In the last two weeks, we raised half a million pounds. We had 15 volunteers to go through the sack of post we had each day to sort out cheques and letters of support that came flooding in."

Six months of intense activity then saw Fordhall Farm in the ownership of 8,000 community shareholders. They had achieved their goal.

For Ben, it has always been his dream to farm his own land. For Charlotte, it's the community that has always been her passion and putting Fordhall at its heart. A place where families could spend their summers, where people could come and enjoy the farm, and future generations could learn the importance of food and the environment.

## 10 years on

"If anyone had asked us how Fordhall would look in 10 years' time back in 2006, we would not have been able to visualise the success it is today," says Charlotte. The farm, now fully open to the public, attracts more than 25,000 visitors a year, offering free farm trails, group tours, glamping in their yurts, educational visits, events, courses, weddings, plus much more.

Ben, now 31, has a 100-year tenancy granted from the community landlords and says: "This is all I ever wanted to do, and back then we had nothing,

therefore we had nothing to lose but everything to gain."

What started with few livestock, now boasts 200 sheep, more than 100 cattle and 60 pigs. Ben's business has grown year-on-year, selling his produce directly to the public through the successful farm shop housed in the old Dairy Building, which is also home to his butchery area, an organic café, meeting room, function room and classroom space.

Ben also runs a fleet of catering trailers that cater at prestigious events across the country, including the Ashes match at Edgbaston Cricket Ground, and can produce 5,000 sausage rolls in a day.

Charlotte manages the community trust, which now extends past their shareholders and local families. Fordhall Farm has an established Care Farm working with adults with learning disabilities in the community garden.

The farm is also running a successful Youth Project; supporting young people from across the country that often have no dreams and little career ambition. Charlotte and Ben are the perfect role models, having come from no experience and no money, showing that it's possible to make something a success if you have the drive and determination.

"What we have been very good at is seizing the opportunity and giving it a go. If it doesn't work then that's ok – just have a go. It's okay to fail, what matters is how you then use the experience," explains Charlotte.

Fordhall Farm has truly reconnected people with nature, removed the isolation of farming, and proved that there's a huge amount of public support.

"What Ben and Charlotte have done is brilliant, everyone believed in what they were doing. They are very determined and very committed," says David Proctor, 76, who volunteers and visits the farm two to three times a week. "I want to help out and keep my hand in farming, and this allows me to do that."

Not only is Fordhall Farm now a thriving community business, it has its very own love story. Both Ben and Charlotte are now married to Fordhall volunteers and have their own families who they hope will grow up to love Fordhall as much as they do. 🐾





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## Great Yorkshire Show tickets

The 158th Great Yorkshire Show promises to be a wonderful day out for all the family and we have five pairs of tickets to give away.

More than 130,000 visitors are expected to flock to Harrogate to enjoy the three-day rural extravaganza, which runs from Tuesday 12 to Thursday 14 July.

Organised by the Yorkshire Agricultural Society, the show is an exciting blend of the best in British farming, cutting-edge fashion, dazzling cookery demonstrations and traditional country skills, mixed with impressive garden displays.

TV chef Rosemary Shrager will also be showing off her cooking skills, while the motorcycle display team, the Bolddog Lings, will be thrilling the crowds.



**5 pairs of tickets to win!**

To be in with a chance of winning a pair of tickets, answer the question and send your details to the address on page 35.

**Q:** How many years has the Great Yorkshire Show been running?

● This competition is only open to NFU Countryside members and closes on 4 July.

● For more information, visit: [greatyorkshireshow.co.uk](http://greatyorkshireshow.co.uk)

## Win Garden Show tickets

The Garden Show at Loseley Park is the perfect event to find all you need to enhance your home, help your garden grow and give all the family a great day out.

You can browse the shopping area where 150 businesses will be offering the latest plant or garden accessories and the children can enjoy the funfair, puppet shows and bouncy castle.

This is an excellent opportunity to explore Loseley's stunning parklands and beautiful walled gardens, with the chance to take a guided walk with one of the garden team, plus the garden show ticket has the added bonus of offering discounted entry to the free flow tours of Loseley House.

● The show runs from 22-24 July at Loseley Park, Guildford, Surrey. Adults £7, seniors £5, child £3 (4yrs and under free), family £18 (2 adults and up to 4 children), free flow Loseley house tours: £4 (normally £9)

Visit: [thegardenshowonline.com](http://thegardenshowonline.com)

● We have 5 family tickets to give away to Countryside members. To be in with a chance of winning, send your details to the address on page 35.



**5 family tickets to win!**

## The Melplash Show tickets

The Melplash Agricultural Show is the one-day show not to be missed! Being situated on the coast at West Bay, near Bridport, it successfully

celebrates the best of agricultural and rural life by sea. It's not only the showcase for West Dorset farmers and food producers, but also gives those that are not familiar with farming a rare opportunity to find out more about what's involved.

With entertainment all day in the ToolStation main ring and the countryside area, more than 350 trade stands, and superb children's entertainment, it's truly a fantastic day out for all the family. Children 16 years and under go free!

● The show is on 25 August and for your chance to win one of 3 family tickets we are giving away, send your full details and membership number to the address on page 35.

● [melplashshow.co.uk](http://melplashshow.co.uk)



**3 family tickets to win!**



## Lowther Show giveaway

Countryside Fairs is giving away 5 pairs of adult one-day tickets worth £36 each to Lowther Show, which is being held at Lowther Castle, in Cumbria, on Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 August.

As the county's largest countryside-themed outdoor event, Lowther Show is on track to welcome more than 36,000 visitors again this year. The two-day show boasts a comprehensive have-a-go itinerary for the whole family, including gundog handling, clay shooting, survival camp, field archery, falconry and ferreting! The jam-packed show also offers more than 250 exhibition stands, picnic areas, a crammed main arena schedule, children's entertainment, food festival and live folk music. Remember - children aged 15 and under can enter the show free of charge!

● For more information, visit: [lowthershow.co.uk](http://lowthershow.co.uk).

● For your chance to win one of 5 family tickets we are giving away, send your full details and membership number to the address on page 35.



**5 family tickets to win!**





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● Order online at: [thompson-morgan.com/NFU65](http://thompson-morgan.com/NFU65)

Please send details of your order, along with a cheque to cover postage (payable per free collection), to: NFU Countryside, Free Pink & Snips Offer, Dept NFU65, PO Box 162, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP8 3BX. Please make cheques payable to T&M and remember to write your full name and address including postcode on the back of your cheque. (Do not send stamps or cash). Only one application per reader.



Delivery to UK addresses only. Free perennials dispatched From July 2016. Order will be acknowledged by post or email advising dispatch and sent separately. Offer closes 31 July 2016. Please note that your contract for supply of goods is with Thompson & Morgan, Poplar Lane, Ipswich, IP8 3BU (terms & conditions available upon request). All offers are subject to availability

## The Dorset Show offer



The Dorset Show is running from 3-4 September and we are offering a £5 saving on tickets. Don't miss this great event to see Dorset at its best including food and farming, livestock, horse and ponies, fantastic show-jumping, the new 'Shopping In The Avenue Tent' and the new Dorset Artisan Crafts Tent.

Make sure you also visit the homecraft, flower and vegetable tents, which are always a delight.

Plus, see the 175th celebrations of the Dorchester Agricultural Society, the return of the Heavy Horses and much, much more.

● NFU Countryside discounted tickets are £11 each when using the discount code NFU6102 at [dorsetcountyshow.co.uk](http://dorsetcountyshow.co.uk), saving £5 per person. Children go free.

## Usk Show ticket discount



Come along to Usk Show, in Monmouthshire on Saturday 10 September. The livestock competitions showcase the best of the county's sheep, cattle and pigs. There's a large horse show including dressage, side saddle and show jumping. There are poultry, rabbit, horticulture and homecraft marquees, plus they have goats, a dog show, steam corner and vintage tractors.

The countryside ring welcomes back the Welsh Axemen, who will be joining regular contributors from Black Mountain Falconry, Rowan Working Horses and Wye Valley Working Gundogs.

All this, plus more than 300 traders, outside, or in the craft, shopping and food marquees.

● NFU Countryside members can purchase Adult Advance Tickets for £9 each by going to [uskshow.co.uk](http://uskshow.co.uk) and using promotion code NFU2016. Offer closes 7 September. Show day price is £12.





# ACONBURY SHEPHERD HUTS



**New  
2016  
Brochure**

**Aconbury Shepherd Huts are traditional and hand built from scratch in Rural Herefordshire.**

Our popularity in the market place has increased tenfold over the past year and 2016 has got off to an excellent start with the production of our new brochure, a brand new web-site and a good order book. Our huts are used for glamping sites, home offices, classrooms for private schools, additional accommodation, playhouses etc. As our huts are hand built they can be adapted to suit nearly all requirements. We have huts all over England including the Isle of White and even Italy so we are now international! Our workshop is always open for visitors as we like potential customers to see how well the huts are made. You can also enjoy a piece of homemade cake and a cup of tea. **So before you go spending a small fortune on a hut from our main competitors, our basic measuring 14' x 7' is insulated, certified electricians, choice of external colours, decorated internally, double glazed etc all for £9,280.00 plus delivery!**



Please contact Steve to order our new 2016 brochure / information on 01981 540090 & 07768 206296 or visit the new web-site at [www.aconburyshepherdhuts.co.uk](http://www.aconburyshepherdhuts.co.uk)  
Email: [steve@aconburyshepherdhuts.co.uk](mailto:steve@aconburyshepherdhuts.co.uk)

# RAPLAS



**RAPLAS offers a FREE tip for polythene crop covers and many types of agricultural plastic waste such as plastic cans and silage wraps**

**For further information,  
contact Richard at RAPLAS  
Telephone: 07966 052 251  
Email: [raplasUK@gmail.com](mailto:raplasUK@gmail.com)**

## GILLHAMS GRAVEL RAKE



The revolutionary  
**GILLHAMS GRAVEL RAKE**  
is easy to use, delivers a perfect finish  
and cuts out weed problems  
**Available in 2 sizes**  
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**07960 975123**  
[www.gillhamsgravelrake.com](http://www.gillhamsgravelrake.com)



## Bored with bad broadband?

Avonline launches a brand new Superfast Satellite Broadband service delivering up to 30Mbps.

As the largest provider of satellite broadband services across the UK, NFU affinity partner Avonline Broadband now offers government-subsidised vouchers across England and Wales. This means that for qualifying homes, farms and businesses, there are no upfront costs to pay. You may be entitled to a voucher that saves you up to £800. With new services now offering speeds of up to 30Mbps, email, internet, social media, streaming and downloading is now accessible to anyone.

Britain's farmers are facing increasing demands to have a decent broadband connection. Avonline guarantees 100% UK coverage and usually install in about a week. With speeds of up to 30Mbps, government subsidies now widely available plus added NFU member discounts, there's never been a better time to get a better broadband connection.

If bad broadband is one of the biggest problems you still face, why don't you call us now. For details of our Avonline member discount, call the Countryside Helpline on 0370 840 2030.



## Datatag - stop thieves in their tracks

Datatag, the power behind the CESAR Scheme, is offering Countryside members a discount on their 4x4 Security Marking System to protect Land Rover Defenders.

Members can save up to 35% on a system. Defenders are particularly at risk of theft as most of the valuable parts - doors, bonnets, seats etc - can be dismantled in a matter of a hours. And with no identifying marks, they're seen as a low-risk high-reward target for thieves.

The Datatag system provides an indelible mark of ownership through the use of UV etching, RFID transponders and Datadots, which ensures that your Defender can always be identified even if stripped down. As criminals are looking for low-risk gains, this is a huge deterrent to theft.

### Datatag - stops them in their tracks.

● Contact the Countryside Helpline on 0370 840 2030 or visit the member section of [countrysideonline.co.uk](http://countrysideonline.co.uk) for more details.



## Join us today!

If you're not already a member it's easy to subscribe to Countryside magazine and enjoy all the benefits of NFU Countryside membership, or treat someone to a year-long gift.

- Never miss an issue of Countryside magazine.
  - Save with our specially chosen partners, such as Thompson and Morgan, cottages.com, Mountain Warehouse, Volvo, Bupa and Countrywide stores, to name but a few.
  - Exclusive ticket discounts for rural shows and events.
  - Amazing competitions and giveaways.
  - To subscribe, call: 0370 840 2030 or visit: [countrysideonline.co.uk](http://countrysideonline.co.uk)
- Quote code NS4150 and we will send you these delicious Bettys Corgi biscuits.
- Annual subscription of just £41.50 or three years for £99.

*The biscuits will be sent to the person who has become the member and will be despatched within 20 days unless requested otherwise for gift memberships. Biscuit offer ends 14 July 2016. Offer does not apply to renewals.*

**Bonus Bettys biscuits will crown your membership**



To enter, send your name, address, postcode and membership number on separate postcards for each competition to:  
**Competitions, NFU Countryside, Agriculture House, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2TZ**



Or you can enter online via competitions and offers at:  
**[countrysideonline.co.uk](http://countrysideonline.co.uk)**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Closing date for competitions unless otherwise stated is 14 July 2016. The promoter is the National Farmers Union (the NFU) Agriculture House, Stoneleigh Park, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, CV8 2TZ. The promotion is open to all residents of the UK, including the Channel Islands, aged 18 years or older, except the Promoter's employees or contractors and anyone connected with the promotion or their direct family members. Some offers are for members only and are only open to full NFU Countryside members. By entering the promotion, the participants agree to be bound by these terms and conditions. The NFU cannot acknowledge receipt of entry and no entries will be returned. The Promoter's decision as to the winner is final. Only one entry will be permitted per person, regardless of method of entry. Bulk entries made by third parties will not be permitted. The winner(s) will be notified within 7 days of the close of the promotion by post/telephone/email. There is no cash alternative and the prize will not be transferable. Prizes must be taken as stated and cannot be deferred. The Promoter reserves the right to substitute the prize with one of the same or greater value. The Promoter excludes liability to the full extent permitted by law for any loss, damage or injury occurring to the participant arising from his or her entry into the promotion or occurring to the winner(s) arising from his or her acceptance of a prize. For full NFU Countryside terms and conditions, visit [countrysideonline.co.uk/competitions](http://countrysideonline.co.uk/competitions).



## THE SURFACE DRESSING SPECIALIST

Surface dressing is a process where a hot bitumen is sprayed onto your existing surface which seals and preserves the surface from the weather but also acts as a glue to hold your chosen decorative wearing aggregate in place. This process greatly enhances your outdoor space and saving you costly repairs or even complete replacement.



### Benefits:

- cost effective
- minimal disruption
- natural stone
- anti skid
- maintenance free
- environmentally friendly



### Perfect for:

- domestic and commercial
- large driveways
- roadways
- hotels & guesthouses
- yards
- farm tracks

**With prices from only £5 per sqm you are one call away from the most cost effective surfacing solution.**



**Tarmac  
and asphalt  
supplied and laid**

Are you in need of a cost effective new roadway or have a roadway that has been washed away by the weather? Visit [ecoroads.co.uk](http://ecoroads.co.uk)



# A balanced diet for your dog

**C**OUNTRYWIDE HAS many years of experience in the field of dog nutrition and has specialist staff in its stores who can advise customers on the best diet for their dog.

Here's some of their top tips to ensure your dog has a balanced, healthy diet.

## Being fed for life

The nutrition of dogs is based on the principle that they're being fed for life and therefore the aims are for a long, healthy and active life preventing health problems such as poor coats, skin conditions, bad breath, dental problems, digestive disorders or kidney failure.

They were originally carnivores but have evolved into omnivores, thriving on a wide range of animal and vegetable foods. Dogs are now predominantly fed on manufactured commercial foods which are specifically formulated for their nutritional needs and produced according to quality assurance and safety standards.

The main components of a dog's diet are protein, carbohydrate and fat, vitamins and minerals and water.

## Protein

Protein is essential in a dog's diet and will

fluctuate according to varying life stages. It's especially important in growing animals who are laying down new tissues and with lactating animals for the production of milk.

The quality of protein is as important as the quantity as this affects the digestibility of the food and the amount of food the dog can actually eat. Cereal proteins are, for example, only 50% digestible (cereals and soya) whereas animal-derived proteins (meat, fish, eggs and milk) are 95% digestible.

Surplus protein will be stored as fat, which can lead to a variety of health issues.

## Carbohydrate and fat

Dogs have no specific requirement for carbohydrates as they can convert protein into the glucose that they require.

Fats are, however needed to ensure essential fatty acid supply (linoleic acid) and the carrying of fat soluble vitamins. Dog food should contain at least 50g of fat per kilogramme of dry matter.

## Vitamins and minerals

The balance of calcium and phosphorous in a dog's diet is crucial to ensure good skeletal formation, particularly in large breeds and growing dogs. Lean meat, for example, is low in calcium but high in phosphorous and needs calcium supplementation. However, over supplementation impairs the absorption of copper and zinc, so it's essential for foods

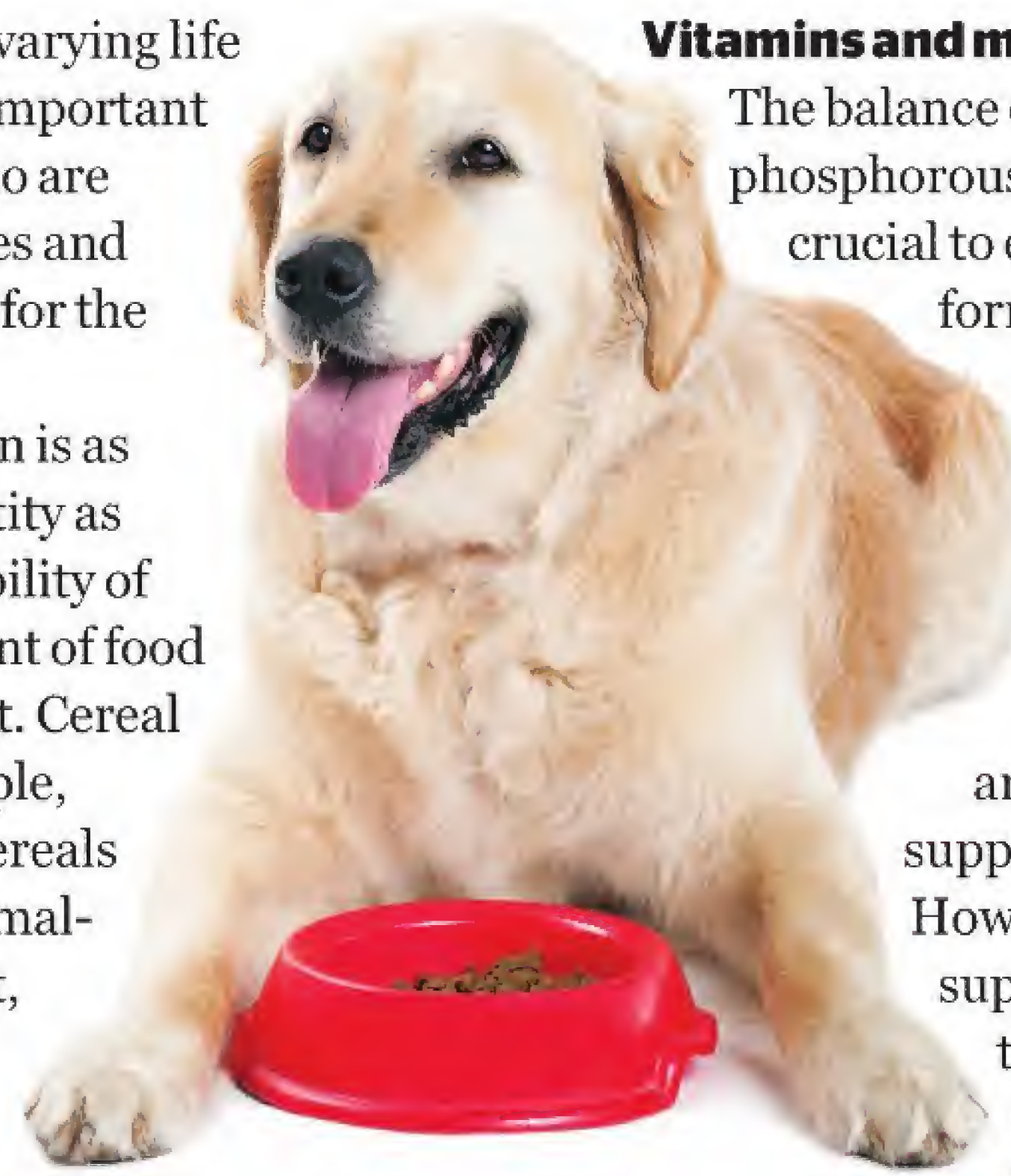
to contain the correct amount.

Minerals in a dog's diet are important as they form structural components of teeth and bone.

## Water

Water is needed by all dogs for blood volume maintenance, excretion of waste and temperature control and a fresh supply should always be available.

● For more information, visit: [countrywidefarmers.co.uk](http://countrywidefarmers.co.uk)



## New dog food range from Countrywide

Countrywide Farmers understands the nutritional needs of your pets and has worked with one of the country's leading pet nutritionists to develop a range of food suitable for all dogs, whatever their activity level.

Made and formulated in the UK, the exciting new range of Countrywide Working Dog food uses only high-quality ingredients. These include salmon, duck and chicken recipes, using a high level of each protein source (26%) to help keep your dog in optimum condition.

All three varieties are wheat and gluten-free to reduce the risk of intolerance and have added glucosamine, chondroitin and MSM to help protect working dog joints. All varieties in the range contain yucca extract to aid digestion and help reduce stool odour.

**Visit us in store this June to be one of the first to try this great new Working Dog food, or speak to our pet specialists about choosing the right diet for your dog's individual needs.**



# Countrywide

MAKING COUNTRY LIFE BETTER  
SINCE 1902

● For details of your nearest Countrywide store, simply visit: [countrywidefarmers.co.uk](http://countrywidefarmers.co.uk)

## Great benefits for Countryclub Plus members

Don't forget, as a Countryclub Plus member you have access to exclusive deals and offers from Countrywide. All you need to do is activate your card at [countrywidefarmers.co.uk/ccnfu](http://countrywidefarmers.co.uk/ccnfu)

You earn points for every pound you spend in store and online and for every 100 points you collect you earn £1 back to spend in store. If you need to request a new card, please call 0800 121 6809 or email: [countryclub@countrywidefarmers.co.uk](mailto:countryclub@countrywidefarmers.co.uk)







### Old Friends Are Best Nipper Jolly Useful Board

Made in Britain, the Nipper is oven and Aga safe and can go in the dishwasher too, making it such a handy piece. Use it for melting camemberts in the oven, chopping herbs, grilling halloumi - you name it - Nipper's up for it! With Doris's exclusive 'Old Friends' design, it's a great gift too. Worth £29.95.

● [dorisandco.co.uk](http://dorisandco.co.uk) or call 01460 477773



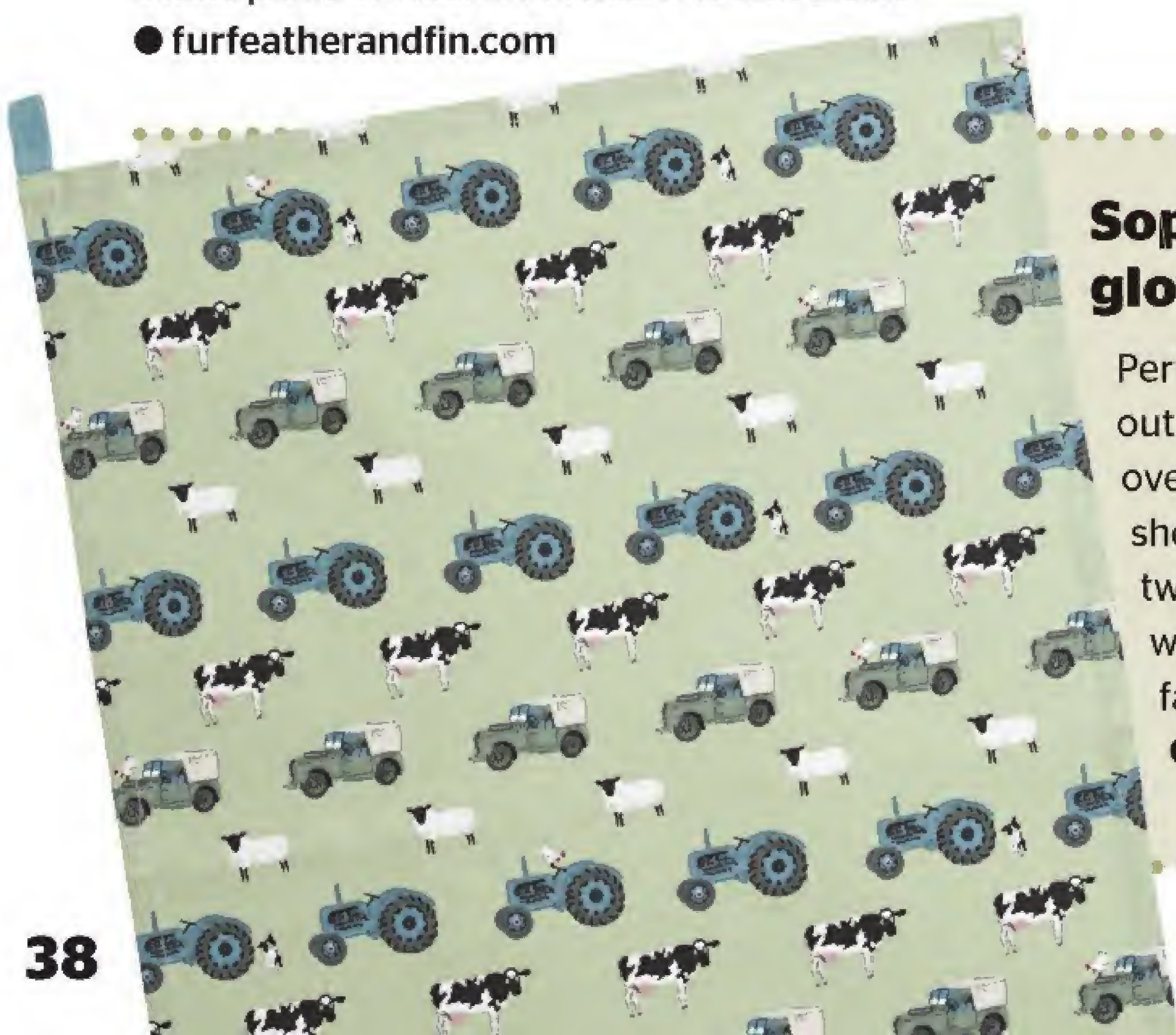
### Fur, Feather & Fin wooden egg larder

This larder is a great asset to any country kitchen and makes a wonderful gift. Two shelves, nesting 12 eggs, it's a little piece of rural loveliness. Worth £19.99

● [furfeatherandfin.com](http://furfeatherandfin.com)



Time for a kitchen revamp? One lucky reader could win all of these gorgeous prizes!



### Sophie Allport farm double oven glove and tea towel set

Perfect for getting those piping hot treats out of the oven, these Sophie Allport double oven gloves feature tractors, Land Rovers, sheep, chickens, cows and a sheepdog or two, perfect for the country kitchen. Paired with this fun 100% cotton tea towel, it's a fab prize, worth £23 together.

● [sophieallport.com](http://sophieallport.com)







### Bettys Tea Time Favourites gift box

Bettys Tea Time Favourites includes delicious specialities: a fabulous Yorkshire tea loaf, milk chocolate guinea and shortbread box all to be washed down with a cup of their famous Tea Room blend tea. Yum!

● [bettys.co.uk](http://bettys.co.uk)

### At home in the country teapot

Delightful 'Girls just want to have fun' teapot worth £50, featuring a set of brightly coloured hens. This fine bone china piece is of the highest quality, light but ultra-strong and durable, and is dishwasher and microwave proof too. Inspired by all that the Great British countryside has to offer!

● [athomeinthecountry.co.uk](http://athomeinthecountry.co.uk)

Special 10% discount for readers of NFU Countryside magazine - quote code NFU10 at the online checkout.



### Leather four bottle carrier

This splendid leather bottle carrier from Life of Riley, priced at £95, can hold up to four bottles and is perfect for all-year round picnics, al fresco dining and country pursuits. The carrier has a sturdy base and internal tie, ensuring that your bottles arrive at their destination in one piece! Easy to transport, the leather handle has a press-stud closure for extra comfort when carrying. Perfect for keeping, or for a birthday, anniversary or wedding gift, this bottle carrier is both stylish and supremely practical.

Size: H38 x W17.5 x L18.5cm

● [lifeofrileyonline.co.uk](http://lifeofrileyonline.co.uk) or call 01799 551 813

### Three Kitchencraft traditional milk bottles

These rather cute milk bottles will add a touch of character to any breakfast table. Why serve your milk in cartons when you can have re-sealable bottles that are practical to use and look great, too. Available from Countrywide stores, priced £4.99 each.

● [countrywidefarmers.co.uk](http://countrywidefarmers.co.uk)



### How to enter

Simply send your full details to: The Great Kitchen Giveaway, c/o Heather Lewis, Countryside magazine, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire CV8 2TZ or email [heather.lewis@nfu.org.uk](mailto:heather.lewis@nfu.org.uk). Closing date is 13 July 2016.

● For full terms and conditions, visit: [countrysideonline.co.uk](http://countrysideonline.co.uk)

### Six Herdy 'flock' mugs

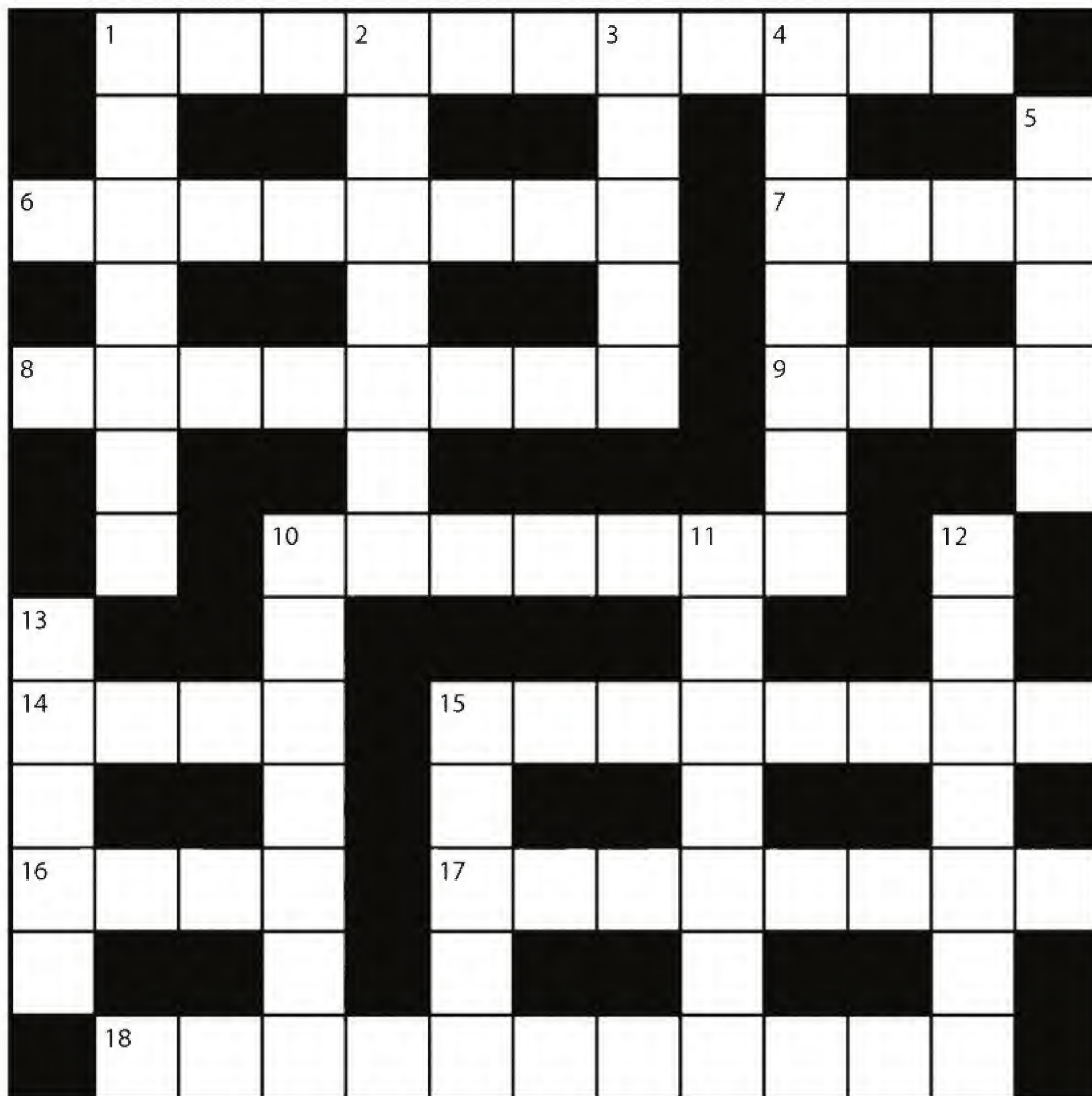
Enjoy a brew with these fine bone china mugs from Herdy - each mug has 36 herdy faces to keep you company whilst you're having a brew. Priced at £11 each, they're handmade in the Staffordshire Potteries - perfect!

● [herdy.co.uk](http://herdy.co.uk) or call 01539 739202





# The Countryside puzzler



The fabulous prize for the winner of our crossword this month is a an apron and tea towel set worth £30, plus a Freddie



*Freddie Parker*

Parker mug worth £16! As temperatures rise and you start to plan your alfresco dining, you can barbecue in style with the Freddie Parker 'Course Specialist' Apron & Tea Towel Set. The set features the brand's signature 'galloping horse and rider' motif in sequence on both, with a play on racecourse terminology on the apron.

The ideal gift choice for chic chefs in the kitchen or barbecue kings or queens this summer!

● [freddieparker.com](http://freddieparker.com)

● For your chance to win, send your completed crossword and contact details by 14 July 2016 to **Countryside Crossword, NFU HQ, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2TZ** and we will print the solution next month!

**Crossword winner for May is:** Alistair Erskine, of Hereford

## ACROSS

- 1** Long, low, hardy Scottish dog breed developed to hunt foxes (4,7)  
**6** Keeping and training of birds of prey (8)  
**7** \_\_\_ Paterson, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs from 2012 until 2014 (4)  
**8** Aberdeenshire working estate with grouse moors, farmland and managed herds of deer and Highland cattle (8)  
**9** \_\_\_ Spumante, sparkling white Italian wine produced in Piedmont (4)  
**10** Poisonous chemical compound used in New Zealand for killing possums and wallabies (7)  
**14** Solitary mammal, larger than a rabbit with

longer ears and legs (4)

**15** Substance such as sandpaper, pumice, or emery, used for cleaning, grinding or smoothing (8)

**16** Rendered fat from a pig used in cooking (4)

**17** Contagious skin disease common in young store cattle (8)

**18** Phenomenon in some plants where two or more colours occur in patches on leaves or flowers (11)

## DOWN

**1** Material used by a farmer to make something airtight or watertight (7)

**2** Study of the relationships between living

organisms and their environment (7)

**3** Jersey \_\_\_, variety of potato grown primarily as a new potato (5)

**4** Quarantine an animal having a contagious disease (7)

**5** Heavy iron or steel block on which metals are hammered during forging (5)

**10** Hard yellow cheese, originally made in the West Country (7)

**11** \_\_\_ animal, horse, buffalo or yak used to pull heavy loads (7)

**12** Stew of mutton made with root vegetables (7)

**13** South American country whose agricultural heartland is the Central Valley (5)

**15** Large nest of an eagle (US spelling) (5)

## Last month's answers





## CONGRATULATIONS TO:

**The winner of the Moorcroft Vase is:**  
Mrs ME Brewington of Devon

**Winners of the Posh Bird Box are** Jill Hitchman of Shropshire, Hayley Walden of Surrey, Julie Westlake from Evesham, Mr M Johnson of Doncaster, Pat Ainscough of Lancashire and Grahame Jennison from Hull

**Battle of the Proms winners are:** Gill Horton of Hereford, Sue Power from Reading, Mr P Weatherhead from Milton Keynes, Elaine Lewis of Hertfordshire, Amanda Smith of Worcester and Jackie Alvin of St Ives



BESIDE THE SEASIDE

The listed UK seaside resorts have been hidden – up, down, across, diagonally, back and forth – in our wordsearch grid. Find them all to discover the name of a familiar couple in the unused letters (5,3,4) .

P	E	N	R	U	O	B	T	S	A	E
S	K	E	G	N	E	S	S	W	U	N
C	A	L	O	B	A	N	N	A	Y	L
H	Y	O	E	A	E	R	A	N	B	O
F	R	O	N	T	N	E	V	A	T	O
I	O	P	E	A	R	M	R	G	I	P
L	N	N	I	D	J	O	I	E	H	K
E	B	R	L	L	A	R	G	S	W	C
Y	N	R	Y	D	E	C	U	N	D	A
N	O	T	H	G	I	R	B	Y	A	L
I	L	F	R	A	C	O	M	B	E	B

AYR  
BANGOR  
BEER  
BLACKPOOL  
BRIGHTON  
CROMER  
EASTBOURNE  
FILEY

GIRVAN  
ILFRACOMBE  
LARGS  
LOOE  
NAIRN  
OBAN  
POOLE  
RHYL

RYDE  
SKEGNESS  
SWANAGE  
TENBY  
VENTNOR  
WHITBY



DID YOU KNOW?

When threatened, the hawkmoth caterpillar will expand the lower segments of its body to give its tail the appearance of a snake, complete with menacing markings that looks just like eyes.



The Wimbledon tennis championships gets through an impressive 142,000 portions of strawberries and 7,000 litres of cream each year, in a tradition that dates back to 1877.

Terry Herbert was using his metal detector on a recently ploughed field near Hammerwich in Staffordshire in 2009, when he stumbled across the largest trove of Anglo-Saxon treasure ever found. All told, the hoard included over 3,500 items, most of which were military-related. Its approximate value was £3.3m.

The Black Death in the mid-14th century was responsible for a shift in the social structure of Britain. Due to the fact that so many died, there were far fewer people to work the land: peasants were therefore able to demand better conditions and higher wages from their landlords. Many advanced to higher positions in society.

SHOW BUSINESS

1. What type of show is staged each July at Fairford in Gloucestershire?
2. On 27 July 2016, which Cheshire market town hosts 'the biggest cheese show in the world'?
3. Which two former English counties lend their names to a style of wrestling on show at Cockermouth in July?
4. World Garden, Summer Garden and the RHS People's Choice Gardens are among the categories judged at which July flower show, now Britain's largest?
5. The Great Yorkshire Show is held each July on the outskirts of which spa town in the county?
6. The President of last July's Bingley Show, Harvey Smith, and his wife, Sue, trained which Grand National winner?
7. Introduced by the Romans, which breed of sheep shares its name with a regional show staged at Cirencester in July?
8. The venue of July's Royal Welsh Show, Llanellwedd, is a village near which town in Powys?



1. A military air display or tattoo, 2. Nantwich, 3. Cumberland and Westmorland, 4. Hampton Court Palace Flower Show, 5. Harrogate, 6. Aurora's Encore, 7. Cotswold, 8. Builth Wells

WORDSEARCH ANSWER: Punch and Judy

ANSWERS





# LETTERS

## PICTURE OF THE MONTH



### TOP SHOT

I love all creatures great and small but I have a passion for butterflies. They're one of nature's miracles. My garden is full of butterfly-friendly plants - photographing them is something else!

**Lisa Wilson**  
By email

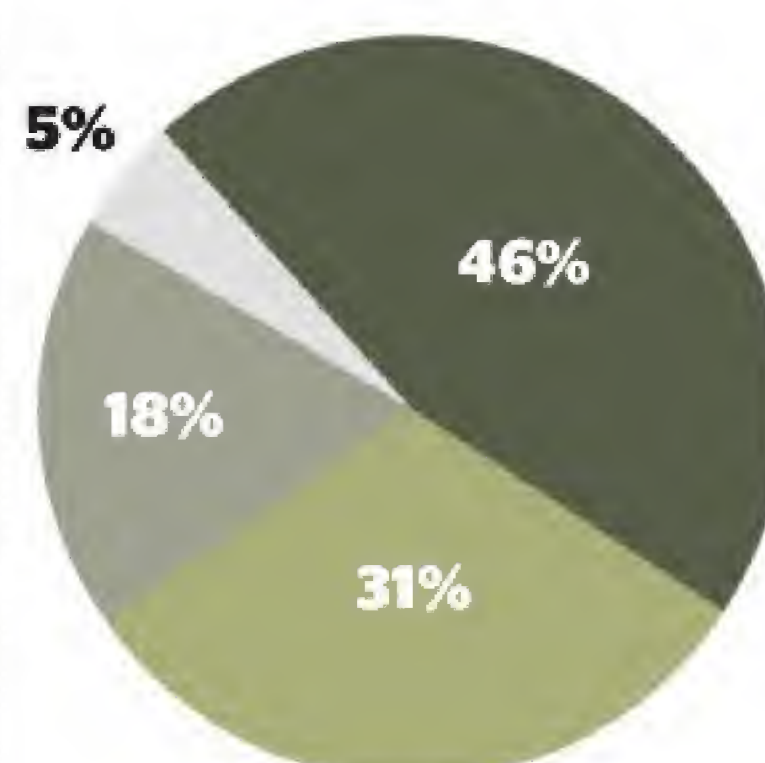
**EDITOR REPLIES:** We think you've done a jolly good job. Many is the time I've tried to snap a butterfly or bumblebee and, just as the shutter goes click, the wings flutter and I end up with a blurry mush to the side of a flower!

### POLL-TO-POLL

Here's a round-up of our latest Twitter polls

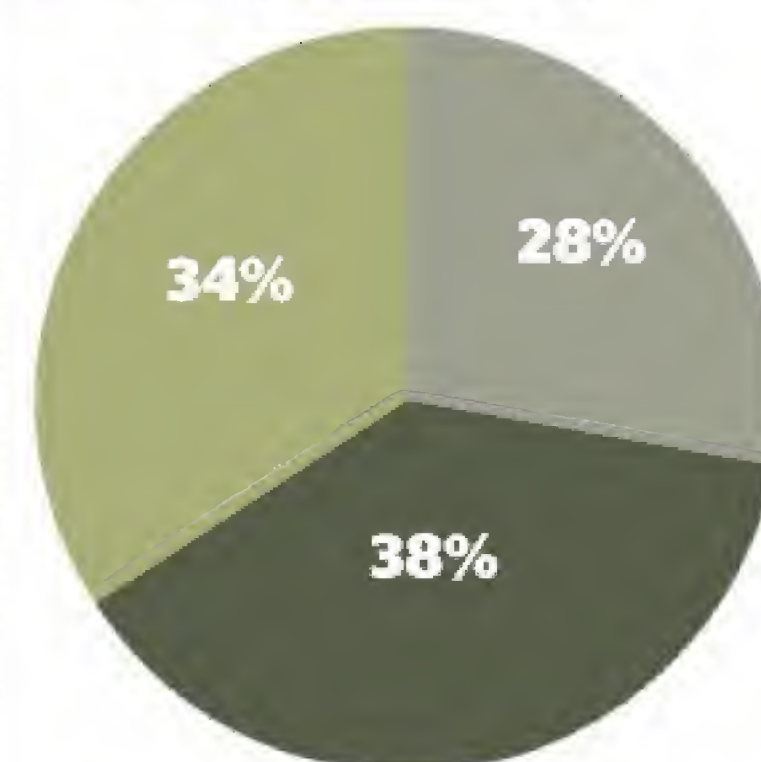
As we celebrate #WorldMilkDay and #HappyCows we want to know your favourite dairy product

- Milk
- Cheese
- Ice cream
- Yogurt



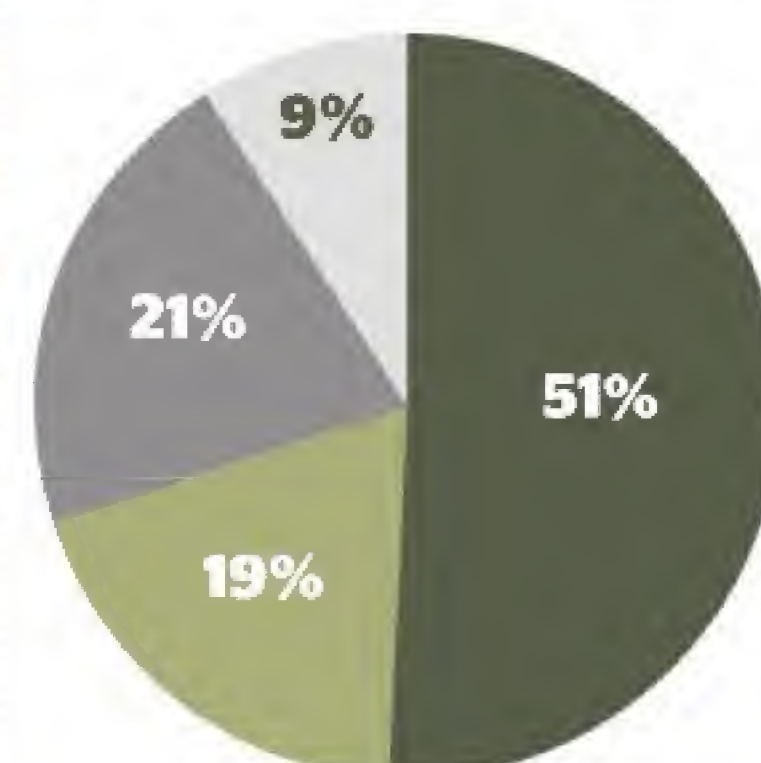
How good is your broadband connection?

- I'm never offline
- 50/50
- Always buffering



In celebration of #BritishTomatoWeek we're asking, how do you eat yours?

- Fresh from the vine
- Mixed in a salad
- With tasty pasta dishes
- In a comforting soup



## WIN our star letter prize!

The winner of our star letter will receive either a men's or a women's Glacier Extreme Waterproof Jacket, worth £59.99.

The Glacier Extreme Women's Waterproof Jacket, with its long body and breathable design, is great for everyday use in the elements. This feature-packed jacket will allow you to find your perfect fit with ease, making it a great companion on rainy dog walks and jaunts across the moors.

The Glacier Extreme Men's Waterproof Jacket is a guaranteed high performance and protective piece, designed to keep you warm, dry and comfortable in unfavourable weather.

Don't forget that members can get a 15% discount at [mountainwarehouse.com](http://mountainwarehouse.com) or in store by showing their membership card.



## JOIN OUR INSTAGRAM COMMUNITY

Keeping in touch with Countryside between magazines is so simple. We have Twitter and Facebook and have now launched our new Instagram site @nfucountryside where we can share news and views and funny and fascinating pictures.

And we are running an exciting photo competition to win holiday vouchers, so join our Instagram community, get snapping, and share your images for the chance of a fabulous prize.



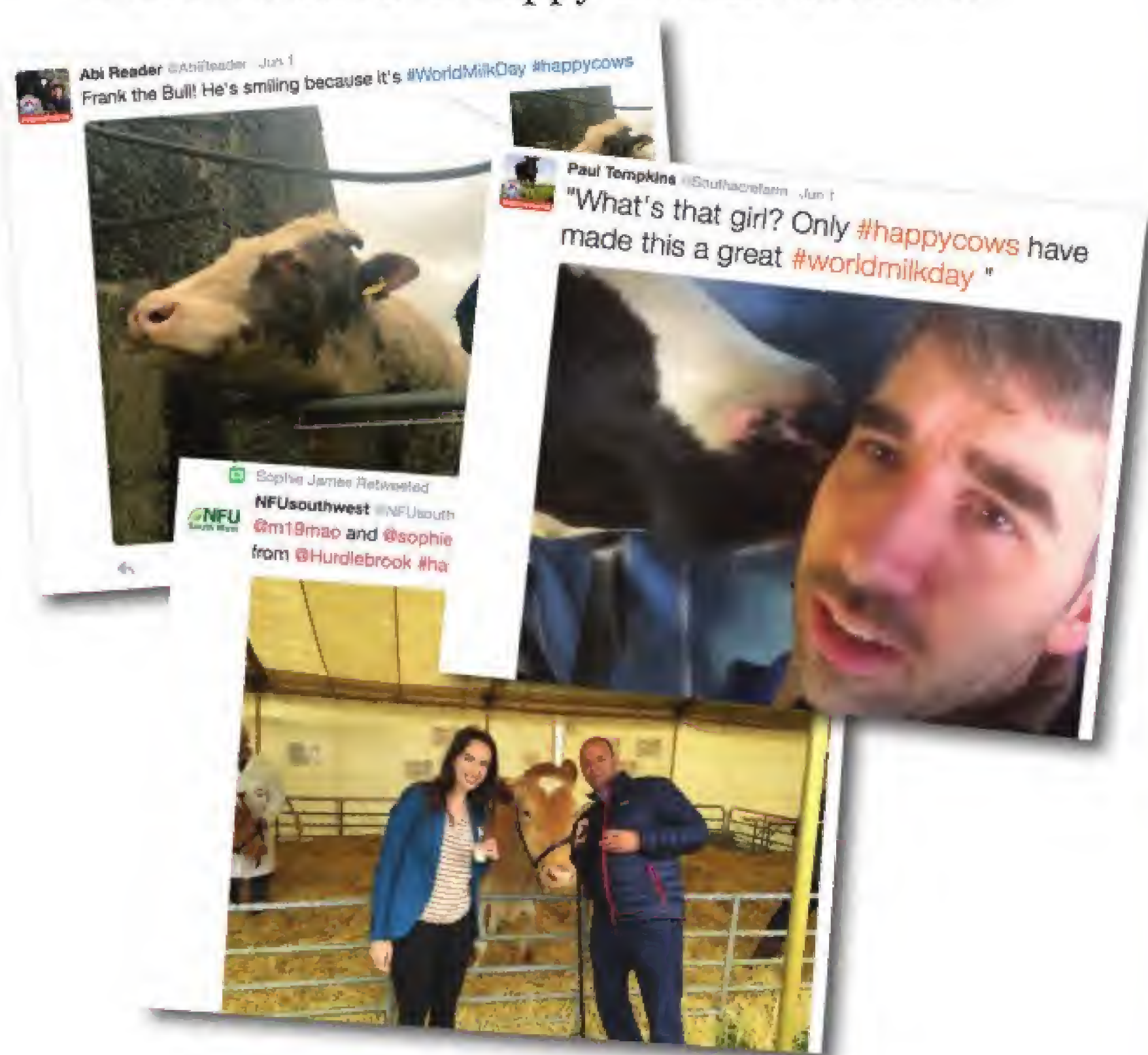
@nfucountryside



## COWS CREATE SOCIAL MEDIA FLURRY!

In honour of World Milk Day in early June, many of Britain's dairy farmers tweeted photos of themselves with their cows to draw attention to the strides they've been making in recent years to promote both milk and animal welfare.

Hundreds of people got behind the campaign, with World Milk Day trending at number 2 in the UK on Twitter and Happy Cows at number 8.



## A BEACON OF KNOWLEDGE

I wish to point out a classic error made in the June 2016 issue. On page 9 in your 'Rural news from your regions' section, the writer refers to 'the east Brecons'.

Brecon is the name of a rural town in Powys, which is also located in the Brecon Beacons National Park. It's customary to refer to parts of the national park as the Beacons but not the Brecons. Unfortunately, this is a mistake that many people make, but not one I would have expected in such an excellent publication as Countryside.

Gerwyn Henderson  
By email

## THE COUNTRYSIDE BLOGGER

By Tracey Bretherton, youth co-ordinator for the British Pig Association

The two British Landrace pigs have settled in really well at school and have developed very different characters. Dorina is very laid back and friendly, whereas Bessie is a little bit bonkers.

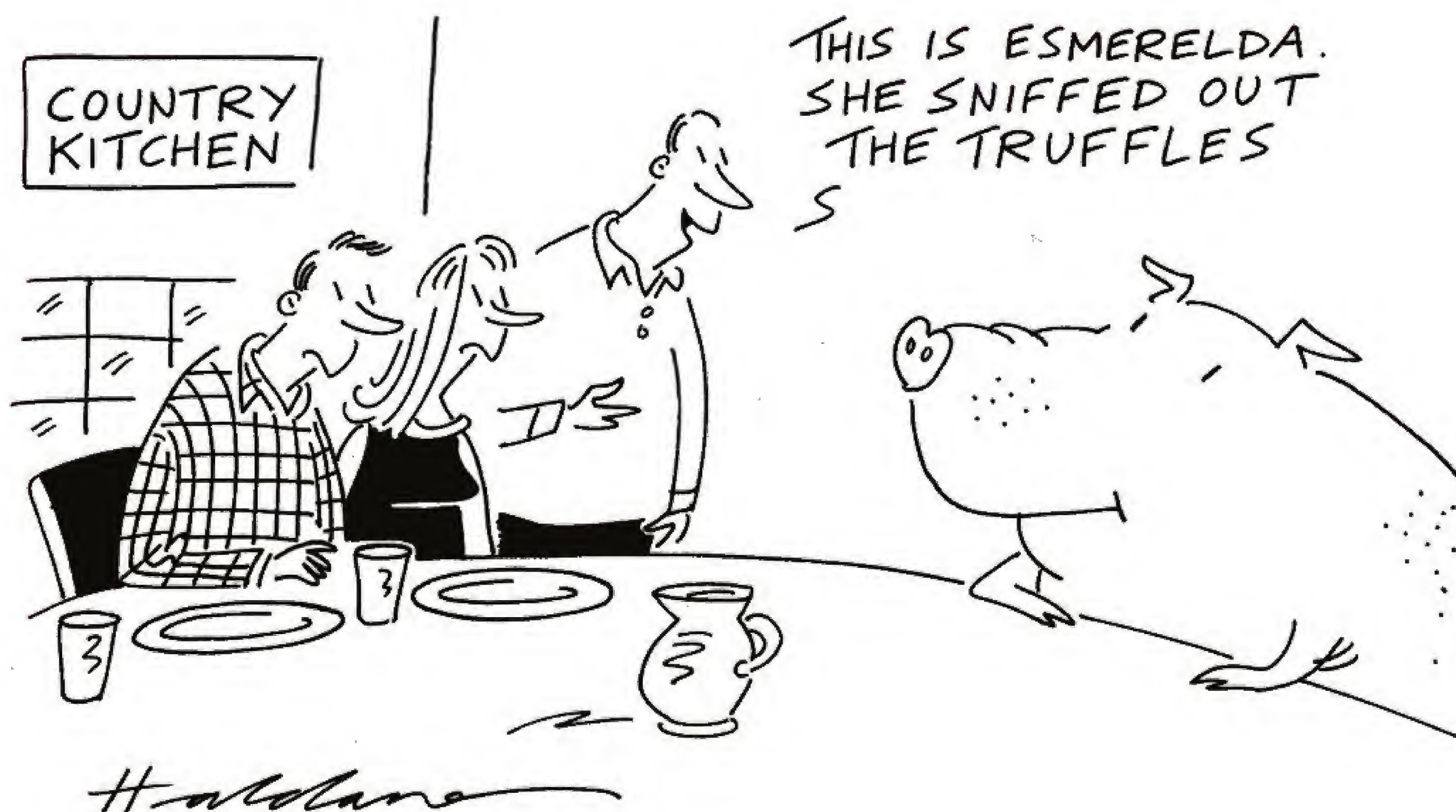
She likes to throw food bowls around and chew students' clothes! They're both sweet-natured pigs though, and we're really enjoying having them at school to work with.

We collected the pigs from The Edible Garden Show at Stoneleigh and soon took them back on the road, this time to attend the National Young Stars event at the Three Counties Showground at Malvern. Young handlers competed in teams of three in a variety of skills, including stock-judging, public speaking, creating a trade stand for their sponsor, and, of course, preparing and exhibiting pigs.

Sasha, Caitlin and Abigail used the British Landraces and represented the Rare Breeds Survival Trust. We also took Jodie, Josh and Kian to represent the Oxford Sandy and Black Club and another ex-student, Summer, competed in the Berkshire Rascals team. So we had a very busy two days in the Easter holidays! All the students and pigs had a great time at the event.

Now we are slowing down the pace while we wait for the first litter of piglets to arrive and for our new pig house to be completed. During our long drive back from Malvern the students decided that we should name the first set of piglets after different types of biscuits, so our next blog will show you what names we ended up using!

● For more rural blogs, go to: [countrysideonline.co.uk/blogs](http://countrysideonline.co.uk/blogs)



## CONTACT US

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Please note, letters may be edited for clarity or length





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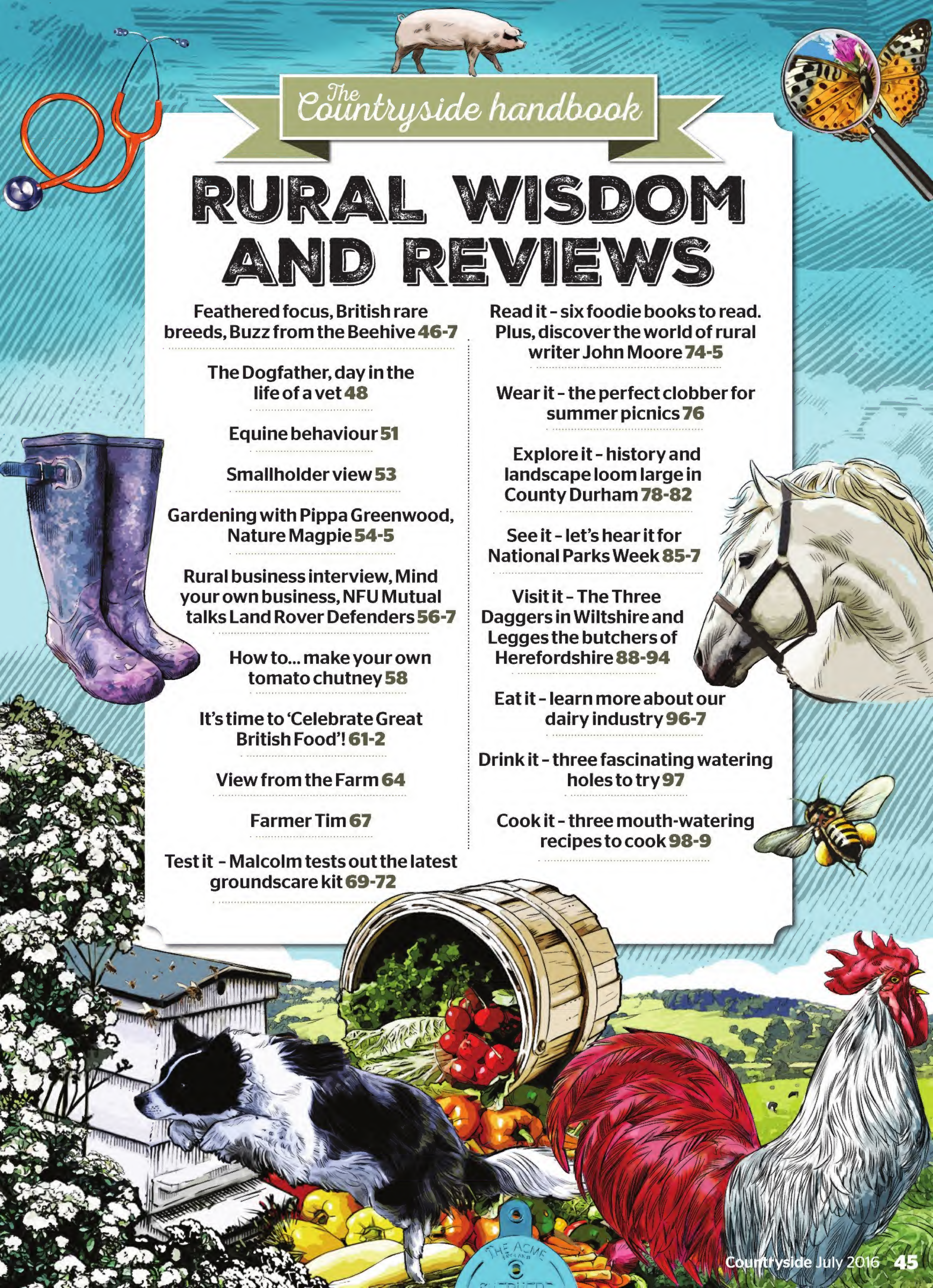
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## *The Countryside handbook*

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Andy is a writer who lives in Shropshire where he has bred poultry for many years. He also runs the website: [chickenstreet.co.uk](http://chickenstreet.co.uk)

**Breed Name:** Marsh Daisy

**Region of origin:** Great Britain

**Profile:** The Marsh Daisy is one of Britain's rarest breeds of chicken, originally created by Mr J Wright of Southport in the 1880s, who maintained a closed flock for over 30 years. Nowadays, as a breed, it has a large number of other chicken breeds within its make-up consisting of Old English Game, Malay, Hamburgh, Leghorn, Pit Game and Sicilian Buttercup. Each of these delivers attributes that are noticeable in the breed and make it a very hardy and reasonably productive bird. Today, it has a dedicated club and relatively solid following. However, it has been on the brink of extinction for most of the previous century.

**Behaviour and upkeep:** Marsh Daisies are a distinctive-looking poultry breed with an upright stance, willow green legs and a rose comb. They're well suited to our climate and make excellent foragers in free-range situations. They're capable of short flight, so if they were to be kept within a fixed run then roofing would be recommended. The hens are moderate layers, but they do lay well into the winter months, which helps extend



## Feathered focus

egg production for the smallholder.

The cocks are not aggressive in their nature and, despite their game-based background, they can be tolerant of each other and are, in general, a gentle breed. The hens can go broody and will rear young which are relatively slow maturing when compared with modern hybrids.

**Plumage/colours:** Black, Buff, Brown, Wheaten

**Particulars:**

**Eyes:** Rich red with black pupil

**Comb:** Rose

**Feet & legs:** Featherless, willow green

**Weights:**

**Cock weight**

5.5-6.5lb (2.5-2.95kg)

**Hen weight**

4.5-5.5lb (2-2.5kg)

**Egg production** - Medium

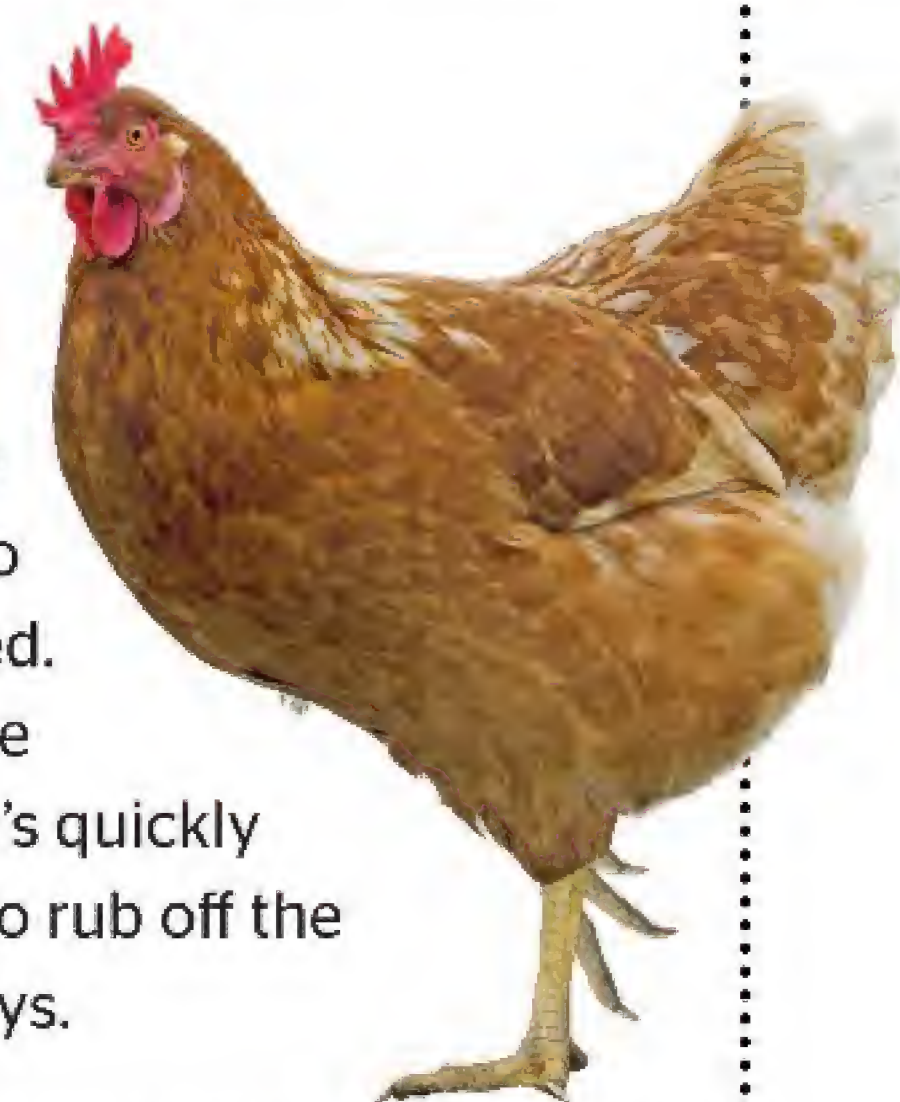
**Egg Colour** - Tinted

**Show classification** - Light, Rare

### 'Ask Andy'

"I have a large flock of Rhode Island Red hens and, while I can tell the individuals apart, can you recommend a quick, easy and temporary way to mark them if I'm working my way through the entire flock inspecting or treating them?"

I had a similar problem when I used to keep and breed Ixworth. You would go into the shed, usually after dark, and then try and inspect each bird in turn. Suddenly one would take flight, the whole lot of them would mingle and I would have no idea who I'd checked. The solution? Purple spray on the legs. It's quickly applied and tends to rub off the scale after a few days.



### Chicken Nugget

A capon is a cockerel that has been castrated in order to make it grow larger and plumper, hence providing better qualities for the table. It was a practiced evolved in Roman times and it was found that the resulting birds grew to a significant size and had a more tender and less gamey flavour than ordinary hens or cockerels. Caponizing can be done physically or chemically, however, it's generally considered inhumane and no longer practiced in many countries, although you can still encounter them on sale in some shops, and frequently in a tin!

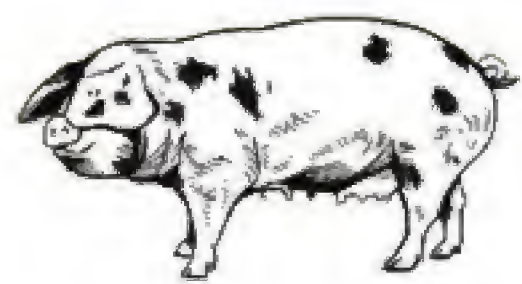
### Did you know?

- More than 20 billion chickens live on this planet at any one point in time. That's more than three birds per person. Did you also know that only one country and one continent is 'chicken-free'?
- The Vatican City is such a small state that apparently there isn't room for a coop, making it a chicken-free country, whereas Antarctica is governed by an international treaty which forbids the

importing of live or raw poultry to protect the penguins from any possible disease exposure.

- Chickens truly are universal and if NASA, who are currently assessing the possibility of them surviving a trip to Mars, succeed then it'll be today the world, tomorrow the universe for our feathered fowl as they boldly go where no chicken has gone before.





# British rare breeds

## Breed: Exmoor Pony

This favourite family pony is now classed as 'endangered' on the Rare Breed Survival Trust's Watchlist, meaning there are now fewer than 500 breeding females in Britain. While the majority of ponies are now bred in studs throughout the UK, herds of semi-feral free-ranging ponies can still be seen on the moor.

**Breed history:** The ponies have been on the moor since ancient times, and it's this environment that is believed to have shaped their size and characteristic hardiness.

Living on the moors has also resulted in the pony having an independent spirit and the ability to survive on low-quality moorland grazing.

Fossil remains of ponies have been found on Exmoor dating back to about 50,000BC. While DNA shows today's Exmoor is not closely related to these ancient ponies, many have noted the resemblance of today's breed to more primitive wild horses.

At the end of the Second World War, there were fewer than 40 Exmoor ponies remaining, and it's these ponies that form the basis of today's population.

**Characteristics:** A hardy native breed of pony, Exmoors do particularly well on grazing conservation sites, yet also make good, all-round family ponies capable of carrying an adult.

## Breed appearance:

Exmoor Ponies are bay, brown and dun in colour and carry characteristic mealy markings on the muzzle and around the eye and flanks. Stallions stand up to 12.3hh, and mares up to 12.2hh, with short clean legs. They have a thick winter coat, mane and tail, which keep them warm on the moor, allowing them to survive conditions other ponies wouldn't be able to.

## What the experts say:

Juliet Rogers, chairman of the Moorland Mousie Trust, the charity that promotes and protects the pony and runs the Exmoor Pony Centre, describes the breed as the 'terrier of the horse world'.

"They're clever and opinionated, but if you work with them, they'll work with you," she says.

She explains that because of its wild genes, the breed is extremely hardy and has become popular for conservation grazing, something she believes bodes well for its future. She puts this popularity down to the Exmoor's physical attributes, which includes eyes that have natural protection against thorns - something unique to the breed.



**Prospects for the future 9/10**

"The breed also has big jaws, so has a tremendous ability to eat scrub and rough grass, so they're fantastic at going into sites and clearing them," says Juliet.

"Their chances of survival are strong, because of their ability to survive, and because they're the pony of choice for conservation grazing."

## Societies

[moorlandmousietrust.org.uk](http://moorlandmousietrust.org.uk)

## Further information

[rbst.org.uk](http://rbst.org.uk)



**Simon Cavill has been keeping bees in Hampshire for more than 10 years. In 2008, he set up a business called 'Bee Good' with his wife Caroline, specialising in natural skincare products using honey and beeswax. More at: [beegood.co.uk](http://beegood.co.uk)**



## Buzz from the Beehive

The peak honeybee swarming period of May and June is now coming to an end and most of the swarms we are being called to now have been in place for some time.

This year we've found swarms in the usual bushes and trees as well as some more unusual places such as compost bins, inside post boxes and even attached to a motorcycle engine.

Any swarms left in exposed areas like the one pictured here in a mature apple tree, are very unlikely to survive the winter and so it's imperative that we rescue them while we can. This particular swarm built a huge nest the size of a tea chest before we got to them and required two people to lift them out of the tree and into a hive.

Late gathered swarms also require careful monitoring by the beekeeper to ensure they can establish themselves rapidly and collect enough stores for the coming winter. We normally end up placing these late swarms into small polystyrene hives called Nuc boxes so that they can remain warm and dry, feeding them with sugar syrup or candy as required.

Meanwhile, having already harvested this year's honey from the oilseed rape crop in early June, the empty supers will go straight back on the hives to collect the best of the season's crop of wildflower honey.

The oilseed honey needs to be removed from the hives quickly as it can set very hard.

This month we also look for the distinctive battleship grey pollen from blackberries appearing in the combs. The nectar from these abundant plants, along with this month's crop of sweet chestnut, rosebay willowherb and white clover all combine to produce my personal favourite late summer honey, which my daughter once named 'liquid sunshine'. It's certainly the taste of Britain at its best, in my view!







# The Dogfather

Have you noticed how dogs usually end up reflecting their owners – and vice versa? Now the thing is, I'm the dog behaviour guy rather than the dog looks guy (that came out wrong, didn't it? I don't look like my Rottweilers, honest). Invariably I need to fix the dog by fixing the owner, too, so I have more than a passing interest in how people and dogs interact.

Well guess what? After 4,000 dogs, I'm increasingly sure that dogs and owners usually mirror each other in more than just looks.

Take today for example. I'm sitting here in a quiet corner of a pub tapping away on my iPad frantically crafting what I laughingly refer to as a magazine column. I'm here making use of the three hours it takes for Mrs Dogfather to get a haircut. (Cut and colour, apparently. Presumably not black and tan to match the Rotties).

It's a funny game, this writing a monthly column. Sometimes inspiration just pops up in front of you, like the Jack Russell at the table opposite. He's lovely. Probably the calmest Jack Russell I've ever seen. He's sitting like a little angel doing nothing more than being quiet and seducing unwitting passers-by into giving him a tickle on the head.

Nobody is tickling the elderly gentleman who owns him (probably just as well) but other than that, the similarity is striking. They're the calmest 'people' in the pub by a long chalk. One's sat reading the paper with a pint, the other's chilling at his feet. It raises a question: is the dog this calm because Dad is, or is it that Dad's like this because he's with the most tranquil dog in town? A bit of both, I've decided.

We tend to become like the people – and dogs – we hang out with. Now that's fine until you hit a problem with dog behaviour and you start to mirror it. Fight fire with

fire, as the old adage has it, and you'll get burnt. Aggressive dogs take real sensitivity to bring around – if you're aggressive back, you're on an upward spiral to big trouble.

The opposite end of the spectrum is nervous dogs with anxious owners. It's a downward spiral of lost confidence. Here's a common scenario: scared dog reacts aggressively to something and frustrated owner starts to lose control. Anxiety follows, it's written all over the owner's face and in their posture. Dog reads the body language and is even less reassured than before. He becomes more anxious, understandably the owner becomes even less confident.

I can fix the dog long-term, but only by changing the owner's responses. Here's a little trick. If you find yourself losing confidence with a dog, it helps to pretend you know what you're doing. Pretending alone won't fix the problem but it's a great start.

Ask yourself 'What would it look like if I were walking this dog down the road like a person who just knows they could cope with anything?' Once you've got that image, take a deep breath and go for it. You might be pleasantly surprised.

Well, I can't hang around here in the pub all day. I've got to go pick up my other half from the hairdressers. Note to self: Make a suitably complimentary comment on the new hair. Forget that, and no amount of looking confident will save me.



**Graeme Hall is recognised as one of Britain's top trainers. He's trained more than 4,000 dogs of all breeds, including some for the Hollywood film industry. For more information and free dog advice, check out: [Dogfather Training.co.uk](http://DogfatherTraining.co.uk)**



## A day in the life of a vet

### Lungworm - what should you do?

Spring and summer are peak times for slug and snail activity, which, if infected, are carriers of lungworm (*angiostrongylus vasorum*). The lungworm is a parasite that can cause serious health problems in animals and can be fatal if not diagnosed and treated. It's becoming increasingly prevalent in the UK.

The most common symptoms are coughing and difficulty breathing; although there are a wide variety of other symptoms, including poor appetite and vomiting. Dogs of all ages are at risk, but generally due to the behavioral intrigue of younger dogs, they're more commonly infected. A watchful eye can help reduce the risk.

Prevention is achievable by using either the spot-on Advocate or a tablet Milbemax but they must be used every four weeks. Using them less frequently

than this will not prevent lungworm. Both products are only available from your vet.

If your dog is unfortunate enough to show symptoms, then you should look to get an assessment by a vet as soon as possible. Although treatment is straightforward, supportive care may also be required depending on the severity of condition. Nevertheless prognosis is generally very good, although sadly the outcome may not be so favourable in animals with severe symptoms.

So identifying the problem early can reduce the threat to life.

Cats are also susceptible to lungworm. It's far harder to keep an eye on your cat but the infection is a different type of lungworm (*aelurostrongylus abstrusus*) that's much rarer and not as severe as in dogs. So although it can be harder to spot, there's a lower risk.



**Rachel Caplan is a small animal vet based in Bedfordshire. Visit: [bonessvets.co.uk](http://bonessvets.co.uk)**





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# Horse behaviour



Melissa Volpi is a freelance writer with a love of riding and horses

## Saddlery, tack and associated problems - part 2

Choosing a new bridle and bit for your horse has never appeared easier. You only have to browse through the pages of Rideaway or Horse Health to see just how much there is on offer – for all price ranges and disciplines.

It's not about the ease of synthetic or the beauty of leather anymore. Now, it's all about comfort. The Rambo Micklem and the Stubben Freedom Bridles are a new genre of bridles that have been designed with your horses' head in mind.

The leather straps are strategically positioned so that they don't put pressure on your horses' sensitive facial nerves. The Stubben Freedom Bridle even goes two steps further – it also offers full freedom of movement for your horses' ears and full sight.

Biting wise, the Neue Schule Turtle Tactio Loose Ring has a unique design that diverts pressure away from the bars of your horse's mouth. And the Sprenger Flex Control has a rubber covering to protect tender tongues. If that's not enough to keep your horse happy and relaxed, then you can buy Bit Butter to encourage acceptance of the bit and stop dry areas forming around the corners of his mouth. Your horse can even be fed Gum Bits before you tack up and ride to eliminate teeth grinding and promote chewing activity.

These innovative new products (and there are hundreds more that I have not mentioned here) are a positive leap forward for equine welfare. But, it's not enough to just respect our horses anatomy and biomechanics – we need to understand why behaviours such as teeth grinding cannot be solved by feeding Gum Bits alone.

## Uncomfortable bridle and napping

Bridling and biting issues is something that I have experienced recently with Maia, my three-year-old Scottish Sports Horse. I wanted everything to be perfect when I introduced Maia to a bridle and bit for the first time. So I kept it simple. I got Maia used to the feel of a headstall and browband brushing backwards and forwards over her ears first. Then, when her head and neck position was long and low (signifying relaxation), I added my bit to the cheekpieces and covered it in Marmite to encourage acceptance.

It didn't take long for Maia to be chewing her new bit contentedly. In fact, she had never seemed more relaxed than when she was standing inside her stable wearing the headstall and bit. Having never started off a youngster before, I can honestly say that I was beyond elated when everything came together so easily.

My joy was shattered two months after starting this process though. All of a sudden Maia started to become head shy and move backwards away from me when I came into her stable carrying the bridle and bit. Things progressed quickly and, within a couple of days, Maia started displaying the same behaviour when I tried to put her headcollar on as well – something that was never an issue for us before.

Maia is a confident horse and it was difficult to know whether this behaviour was down to our relationship or if it was pain related. My first port of call was to get the vet out to



give Maia the once over and check her teeth. I was glad that I did this, as it turned out that Maia's baby teeth were falling out and her adult teeth were growing in. The head tossing, high head carriage, increased mouth activity and moving away from the bridle and bit were all down to pain. Something that has since been solved by introducing Maia to a side pull bitless bridle.

## Check the fit

Lots of behaviour problems can occur because of a badly fitting bridle or bit. Browbands that are too tight can cause horses to rear and bits that are the wrong size and shape for your horse can cause him to toss his head or open his mouth.

So, what's the answer? Buying that new Micklem or Freedom bridle is not enough. Ask a qualified saddler and biting expert for help to not only fit your new equipment, but also to make sure you're using the correct tools for you and your horse.

As a general rule, if you can fit two of your fingers (laid side on) between your horse's browband and his noseband, then he will have enough room to be comfortable. And if you can get one finger between your horse's mouth and the end of his bit, then it's the right length.

Keeping our horses comfortable is what we should all aim to do. But that doesn't just mean buying a new bridle or bit that is designed with this in mind – it's about learning to fit your horses tack correctly and looking beyond Micklem Bridles and Gum Bits to change your horse's behaviour.



**GET IT RIGHT:**  
It's vital to ensure your horse's bit fits correctly

To be continued next month in saddlery, tack and associated problems part 3...





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# Obsessive compulsive cooking

**Clare Hunt** goes a little crazy in the kitchen to make sure nothing she grows goes to waste



**Words by:**  
**Clare Hunt**

Clare is a writer and smallholder novice enjoying the good life in Devon

**O**NE OF MY FAVOURITE things is watching property programmes and getting cross at the people who complain that the kitchens in the houses they're viewing are too small.

They want ballroom-sized kitchens with central islands, wine fridges and 'entertaining space'. They want the 'magic triangle' that maps the relationship between the cooker, the fridge and the sink and determines the ergonomic efficiency of the kitchen.

The 'magicness' of this triangle presupposes that, along with glamour, ruthless efficiency is what we're all looking for in our kitchens. I don't think I am.

One of the reasons I moved to a smallholding was the chance to cook more, using ingredients I'd grown or reared. So rather than worrying if my splashbacks are on-trend or if it takes too long to get from the chopping board to the peelie bin, I like to spend my time in the kitchen figuring out how best to use that day's mismatched items from the garden.

Given half the chance, I'd happily spend all day improvising and tasting. In fact, I rather wish I was Jill Archer (iron-fist-velvet-gloved matriarch of the fictional Archers clan), ruling the farmhouse kitchen, churning out seed cake and Sussex pond pudding for a ceaselessly appreciative and voraciously hungry audience.

But in my modest kitchen, excessive productivity can lead to panic (there's only so much cake one husband can eat before he starts worrying about this year's body fitting into last year's shorts) so

**BAKING FRENZY:**  
There's only so many baked products one husband can eat



I have to be careful not to over-indulge the Jill Archer fantasies.

In the summer months, when home-grown produce starts to exceed pleasantly bountiful and tip into overwhelming, I have the perfect excuse for spending more time in the kitchen: I'm taking advantage of nature's bounty, aren't I?

My expertise at egg concealment is second to none. Why make a cake that uses two eggs when four can be crammed in? When the courgettes get intimidating, they become breakfast, lunch and dinner: lemony courgettes on toast and chocolate courgette cake, anyone? With the slaughter of the spring lambs begins a whole new cycle of finding-things-to-do-with-lamb-that-aren't-roast-lamb. And then, of course, there's preserving.

I know I can't be trusted on a fruit farm. In fact I can't be trusted near a hedgerow. No bramble, sloe or rosehip is safe and I'm never happier than when locked in the kitchen, concocting things to be jarred up and squirrelled away. I grow abundant beans, tomatoes and cucumbers for preservation purposes. I love the eye-watering fug of vinegary fumes that comes with pickling, and the red-hot malevolence of jam boiling in the maslin pan.

Joy is opening the preserves cupboard (yes, there's a whole cupboardful of them) and seeing the neatly stacked rows of gleaming jars, frequently sticky but ready to take on winter. I can relax, knowing that nothing has gone to waste, and we'll enjoy summer in all its sweet and vinegary forms well through the year.

Plus, I know that, should the zombie apocalypse come, we can always hunker down and eat gooseberry jam and dill pickles until the whole thing blows over.



# Gardening with Pippa Greenwood



Pippa Greenwood is a trained botanist and a regular presenter on BBC2's *Gardeners' World*.  
More from:  
[pippagreenwood.com](http://pippagreenwood.com)

This is when the fun really begins in earnest. True, there are still plenty of gardening jobs to be done, but, by now, your garden should be packed full of flowers and foliage colour too, with crops tickling your tastebuds as you make harvests galore. So now that there's plenty for you to feast your eyes on, as well as your tummy, make sure you take every single opportunity to enjoy it!

## Trees, shrubs and climbers

- Dead-heading shouldn't be reserved for summer bedding plants – grab a pair of secateurs and dead-head late spring and early summer flowering shrubs and climbers. The faded flowerheads make a great addition to the compost heap, reduce the risk of grey mould developing and will help the plant to conserve energy.

- Take semi-ripe cuttings of favourite shrubs (see below). Cut a healthy 10-15cm shoot formed this season, cutting to just below a node. Then use a sharp knife to remove side shoots and the lowermost few leaves. If there's any really soft growth at the stem tip, cut this out too. Root the cuttings in individual pots of cuttings compost in a propagator or cold frame. Keep the compost just moist and, when well-rooted, the cuttings can be potted into slightly larger pots and hardened off before planting out in the autumn.

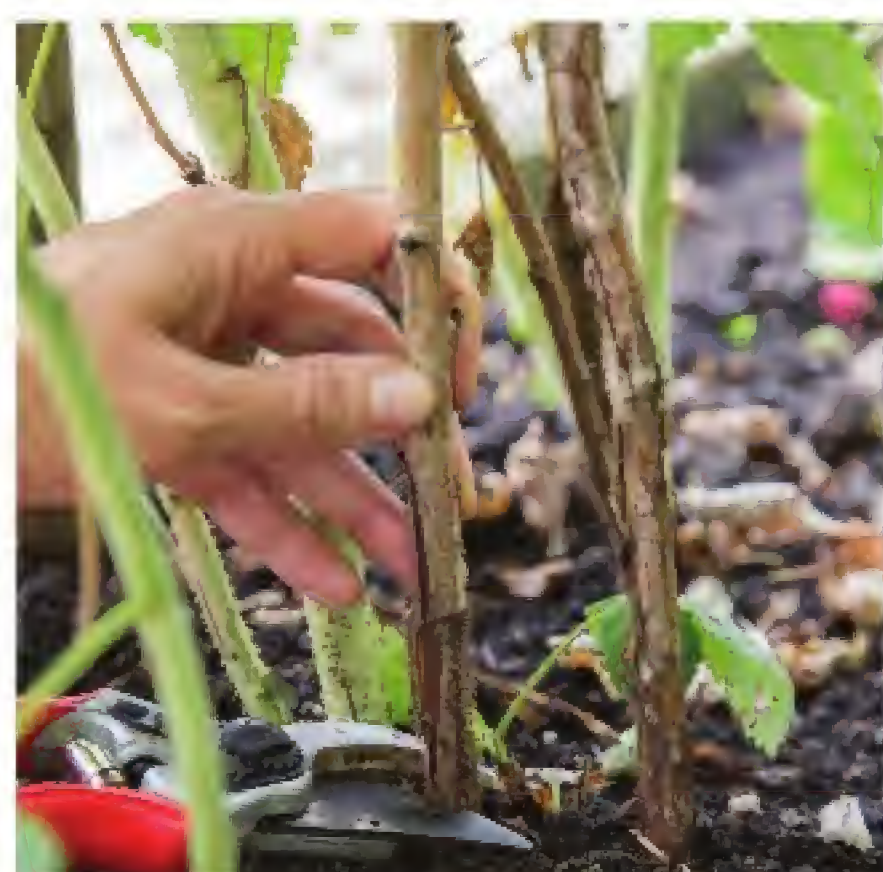


- Towards the end of this month or early next, cut back the long whippy growths on wisterias. Cut each back to within about six buds of the main stem. This is the sort of job that, invariably, takes longer than you'd hoped, but keep at it because this pruning will encourage plenty of flower buds to form for a fantastic display next year.

## Flowers

- As soon as your aquilegias (columbines) have finished forming ripe seed heads, uproot them and before confining them to the compost heap, shake each plant over an area of the garden that could do with brightening up. The seeds germinate readily and will add lots of colour to boring gaps next year.

- If you have plenty of lavender, why not pick some for drying? Cut the flower stems just before the buds open fully, tie them in loose bunches and suspend them in a warm and well-ventilated spot.

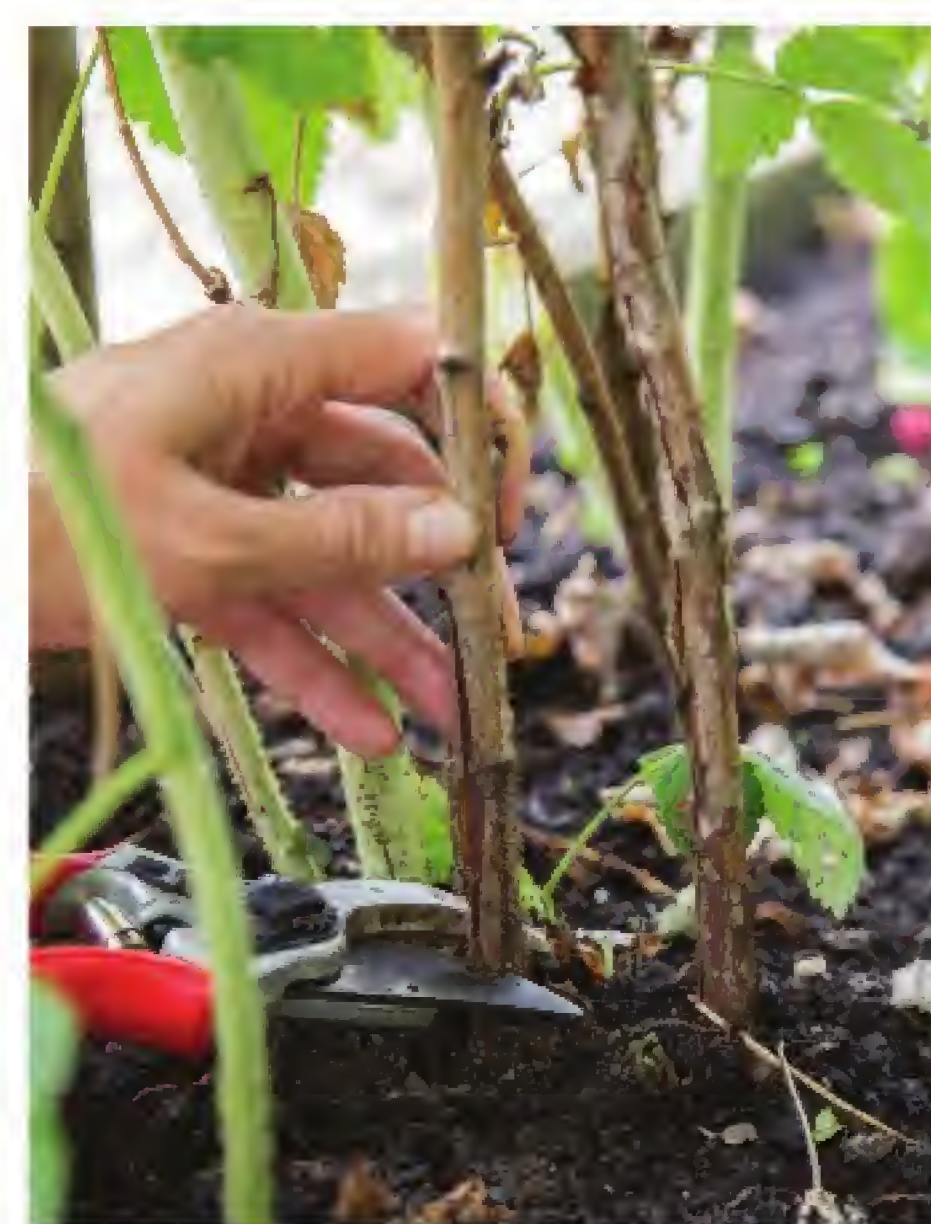


- As soon as they become available, plant some autumn-flowering bulbs and corms. Good garden centres should have a fair range available, including nerines, colchicums and autumn-flowering crocus.



## Fruit

- As soon as you have enjoyed the last fruits on summer-fruiting raspberries, the canes can be cut back to ground level. It's essential that you only cut back those canes that bore fruit and leave the more flexible young canes that did not bear fruit in place, as they will then form the fruiting canes next year. I find it easier to cut back all the old canes and then cut them free from their supports so they can be pulled free together – it's also less likely that you will damage the younger canes.



- Clear dead, damaged and diseased leaves from strawberry plants and, at the same time, locate any healthy looking runners that have formed. If you have already rooted some, then prune these ones out, but if you need more plants, there's still time to root some now. Just peg the runners down into individual pots of moist compost and they'll soon start to form roots.

- Apples and pears should have finished their own natural fruit thinning by now, so it's worth checking to see if the job needs to be done more thoroughly. You're aiming for about 10cm between each fruit if you want to maximise fruit size and quality. If you prefer larger quantities of smaller fruits, then don't thin so dramatically.

## Shrubs for free!

There's always something extra appealing about anything you can get for free and, at this time of year, you can propagate many fantastic shrubs using the semi-ripe cuttings technique described above. Here are some of my favourites:



- |                |               |               |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| ● Skimmia      | ● Berberis    | ● Ceanothus   |
| ● Rhododendron | ● Carpenteria | ● Lavender    |
| ● Aucuba       | ● Photinia    | ● Escallonia  |
| ● Pieris       | ● Elaeagnus   | ● Cotoneaster |





# Nature Magpie with Dan Allen

Dr Daniel Allen is a unique commentator of nature-society interactions. He is also the author of 'The Nature Magpie' out now in paperback (Icon, £8.99/£7.99 eBook).



## 'What have the Romans ever done for us?'

A fine question to ask in this month of Julius Caesar. When it comes to cuisine, the Romans changed the British culinary landscape, introducing and cultivating once exotic, now familiar species. New arrivals to Roman Britain included: apples, asparagus, basil, bay, brown hares, cabbages, celery, cherries, chives, coriander, cucumbers, garlic, grapes, guinea fowl, leek, marrows, mulberries, onions, pears, peas, pheasants, radishes, rosemary, savoury mint, shallots, thyme and turnips.

## What's in a name?

Have you ever wondered why pig, sheep, cow and calves in the fields are called pork, mutton, beef and veal on the plate? The answer appears to be connected to the Norman Conquest of England (1066). It's often said that the Anglo-Saxon peasants who continued working the land retained the Anglo-Saxon names of domestic animals. The Norman gentry, on the other hand, who could afford to eat such animals, labelled the meat in Norman-French. This difference, however, is not entirely accepted.

The late lexicographer, Robert Burchfield, once wrote: 'It is sometimes said that the Normans brought many culinary and gastronomic terms with them and, in particular, that they brought the terms for the flesh of animals eaten as food. This is no more than a half-truth.'

Burchfield cites Samuel Johnson's 'Journey to the Western Isles', in which 'a beef' rather than a cow was killed, suggesting that by the 18th century, French terms referred to both the animal and its flesh.

Although a fair point, this does not disprove the Norman Conquest connection. Johnson was writing more than 700 years after the invasion. The derivatives of words in use today also seem to underline earlier Anglo-Saxon and Norman socio-economic and cultural differences. Anglo-



Saxon domestic animals: producing and tending. Norman-French flesh and food: consuming.

Whether you believe the connection is an 'enduring myth', 'half-truth' (Burchfield), or 'reasonable generalisation' (Bill Bryson, 1990), the language difference is certainly food for thought.

**Pig:** Middle English *pigge*

**Hog:** from Old English *hogg*

**Swine:** Old English *swin*

**Pork:** Old French *porc*  
**Sheep:** from Old

English *sceap*

**Mutton:** from Old French *moton*

**Cow:** Old English *cu*

**Beef:** Old French *buef*

**Calf:** Old English *cealf*

**Veal:** from Middle French

## Bathroom fruit

My favourite fruit has got to be the mango (*Mangifera indica*), for its sweet taste and smell, soft but pulpy texture, and juices that drip down your face and arms.

As the national fruit of India, Pakistan and the Philippines, mangoes are not short of admirers. According to legend, Manu (the progenitor of mankind) asked Brahma (the Hindu god of creation) to create a fruit for everyone: 'Lord! grant us a fruit full of sweet juice, which has the fragrance of flowers, sweetness of fruits and nutrition of cereals. Also, let it be accessible to all, rich and poor.' Brahma agreed,



pouring drops from his kamandal; mango groves later sprouted there.

Although the mango may not be British, I like this idea of a fruit being accessible to all. For more than 4,000 years it was celebrated for such qualities in Indian art, poetry and literature.

Despite this, during the British Raj the colonists, the British, did not enjoy the sight of Indians sucking on mangoes with juice dripping all over the floor. Dr M.S. Randhawa observed that the British would insist that the Indian staff in their houses only eat mangoes in the bathroom. With this, the mango's somewhat derogatory tag of 'bathroom fruit' was born.

Sadly, this forgotten British imperial past leaves a rather sour taste in the mouth.



# Ask the rural entrepreneur

**Guy Whitmore** talks to **Iltud Dunsford**, owner of Charcutier Ltd, about the impact artisan producers can have on rural economies



**Q** Do you think artisan food producers are enjoying a revival?

**A** There's definitely a growing market, but producers still have to work hard to educate people and reconnect them with food. The challenge is always to attract those who don't understand the true value of food, and help them understand the importance of food's quality and provenance.

Small businesses have an advantage here as they can get out and talk to people. This personal connection with consumers means that more often than not, they get it.

**Q** Are people prepared to pay more for better quality food?

**A** One of our mantras is 'buy less but buy better', and our aim is to help people understand that they can have quality, regardless of budget. There are people out there who are putting quality above price.

At farmers' markets you see customers on a very tight budget, but who believe in buying direct from farmers and buying real food. They can't afford a lot, but they still want quality and they think about what they're



going to buy and how they're going to use it. They pay for the quality, but make it go much further.

**Q** How do businesses like yours support rural communities?

**A** In two ways - one is supporting local economies by employing local people and buying produce from local farmers and businesses, and the other is to be engaged with the community.

In our case, this means understanding the products our community wants, which is the more traditional meats as opposed to the more exotic products that we also do.



**Q** Does your use of rare breeds help their chances of survival?

**A** It's ironic, but in order to save rare breeds, we need to eat rare breeds. We don't only use rare breeds, but having a market for them certainly provides a value to them, which means it's financially worthwhile to rear them. This can only help with their long-term survival.

Some food producers start with rare breeds and then switch when the economics of rearing them hit home, but by sticking



**Jerry Marshall is CEO of the Arthur Rank centre, which supports rural communities. He is a successful entrepreneur and an FCN trustee. Visit: [germinate.net](http://germinate.net)**

## Mind your own business

Over the first half of the year this column has taken readers on a whistlestop tour of setting up a rural business or farm diversification project. Now you have a cunning plan and the figures say the business is viable. It's time to roll up your sleeves and get hands-on.

Here are my hard-won top tips.

- It will cost more and take longer than you think. Even when you factor this in, it still seems to take longer and cost more than you think.
- Keep your financial records and cash flow projections up to date. Are you making a profit? Are you in danger of running out of money? If so, when? And what can you do about it now?
- Be open and honest with customers, suppliers and staff. When you mess up, tell them, apologise and sort it out. A customer with a well-handled

complaint is more likely to recommend you, than the one who received perfect service.

- Don't be shy: ask for help and ask for sales referrals. Thank customers and ask if they have any friends who might also be interested and ask if you can quote their name.
- Ask your customers what they think: what do they like? What's not so good? A simple open question - 'what would make what we do better?' - is always well-received.
- Persist! You can do it!

### Helping others to help themselves

Germinate Enterprise programme recently ran in Northamptonshire. Unusually, several of the participants were homeless. The group had a diverse range of business ideas, from



## Factfile

- Charcutier Ltd supplies traditional bacons and British sausages, as well as continental sausages and snack salamis. This includes fresh, cured, cooked, smoked, air-dried and other products.
- The company is based on Illtud's 167-acre family mixed livestock farm, where he rears Pedigree Welsh Pigs.
- Retailers stocking Charcutier Ltd products include London's Fortnum & Mason, The Carrot Cruncher in Newcastle Emlyn, Wrights Independent Food Emporium, Hay Deli and the Organic Fresh Food Company.
- Charcutier Ltd provides a variety of courses including knife skills and introductory courses for sausages, cured, cooked and smoked products.

with them, and getting a reputation for quality, as we have, it creates a sustainable market for rare breeds such as the Pedigree Welsh Pig, which we use.

**Q** As a small artisan business, is wider recognition and winning awards important?

**A** Yes, it's massive, and provides us with a platform to promote our business and what we do. I believe it's business changing, as people take you seriously when you win an award. It recognises the hard work of everyone involved in the business, and gives consumers the confidence to try it. We were delighted to win this year's BBC Food and Farming Award for Best Producer in the UK.

● Visit: [charcutier.co.uk](http://charcutier.co.uk)



running a bistro to first aid training. One individual, who had been facing long-term unemployment, left the course with plans to set up a DIY and garden clearance business and another to establish a therapy garden. The course leader felt that one of the most rewarding aspects of being a Germinate Enterprise facilitator was the ability to transform people's lives. How about you?

# Watch out! Land Rover thieves are about

**Tim Price**, of rural insurer NFU Mutual, looks at measures owners can take to protect their beloved Land Rover Defenders

Land Rover Defenders are an iconic feature of the British countryside. Still used daily on thousands of farms, they're also much loved as a classic vehicle to restore and cherish by enthusiasts.

Since production of the Defender ended at the Land Rover Solihull plant at the beginning of the year after 67 years, the vehicle's classic status has been reinforced. Unfortunately, a knock-on effect of their increasing popularity and value has been an increase in thefts.

Claims data from NFU Mutual, which insures a large proportion of Defenders on the road today, shows that claims costs for theft of Defender vehicles and parts have risen by 75% since 2012. In 2015 claims costs approaching £1 million were recorded.

Part of the attraction of Defenders to thieves is their simple construction, with body parts such as doors and bonnet simply bolted on. Until recently, locks and alarms were pretty rudimentary too, with sophisticated keys, and immobilisers – which have made it much harder for thieves to steal modern cars – sadly absent.

So how can you protect your Defender? The first priority is keeping your Landy out of sight, so it does not get on the radar of would-be thieves.

When not in use Defenders should, if possible, be parked in a garage or a secure area that's well lit at night. Never leave keys in the ignition and keep keys out of sight at home and when out in public areas.

Next, consider fitting after-market security devices. It's worth looking out for devices that have been tested and approved by Thatcham, the UK insurance industry vehicle research organisation. Discounts for a range of Thatcham-approved security devices are available to Defender owners insured by NFU Mutual.



## Top tips for securing your Defender

- Fit a mechanical immobiliser such as a Thatcham-approved steering or pedal lock.
- Fit an alarm for added security and consider adding a tracking device.
- Thieves will target component parts, so consider marking them using a forensic marking solution or system.
- Keep the vehicle in a lockable building or park in well-lit areas, that are overlooked.
- Have the vehicle identification number etched on windows.
- Consider fitting a hidden battery isolation or a fuel cut-off switch.
- Take photographs of unusual features, modifications, damage or repairs which could aid identification if stolen.

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# How to... make spicy roasted tomato chutney



In keeping this month's 'Countryside Kitchen' theme, readers can enjoy a traditional chutney with a twist. This spicy tomato chutney is superb with homemade burgers, your favourite cheese or as an alternative with a ploughman's.

## Ingredients

Makes approximately 2.5kg of chutney

2kg of fresh, ripe tomatoes  
1 red pepper  
3-5 fresh red chillies (vary to taste)  
3-4 cloves of garlic, peeled.  
1 onion  
Fresh herbs (rosemary, thyme and oregano and more if required)

Olive or rapeseed oil  
125g sultanas  
200g eating apples  
300g cooking apples  
500ml cider vinegar  
350g brown sugar  
2tsp mustard seeds  
Bay leaf  
Stick of cinnamon  
Lemon juice

## Method

● Peel and chop cooking and eating apples and stew in a large pot with sultanas, brown sugar, mustard seeds and cider vinegar. Then add the bay leaf and stick of cinnamon.

- Cut tomatoes in half and place on a baking tray with chopped onion, peppers, chillies, garlic cloves and fresh herbs on the stalk. Drizzle olive oil and lemon juice over them, then put them into the oven at 180c for 20 minutes.
- Once roasted, take out of oven and discard the herbs.
- Chop the tomatoes on the baking tray to ensure none of the juices are lost, then add the roasted tomatoes, onion, peppers, chillies and garlic to the stewed apples.
- Simmer gently until the required consistency is reached, adding vinegar and sugar as needed to get the required sharpness or sweetness.
- Add the chutney to sterilised jars and seal.





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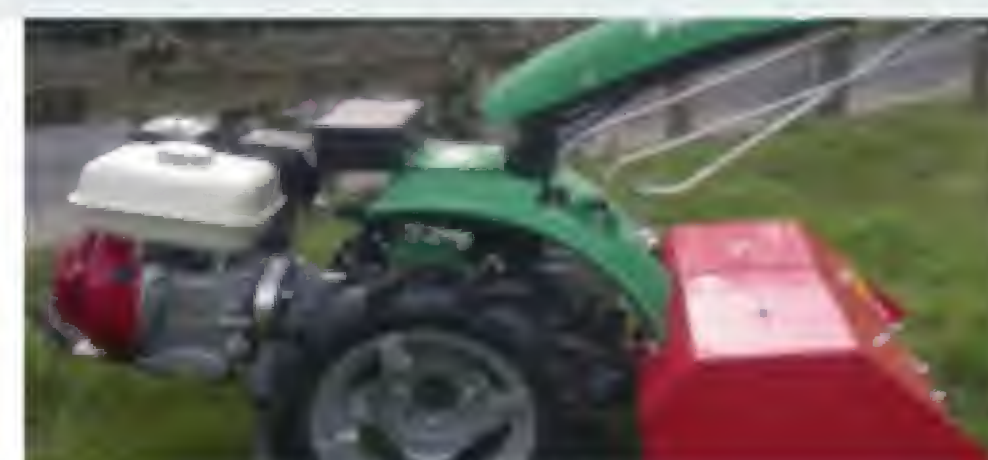
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pH	6.0	6.0	Typing	Adequate level:
Phosphorus (ppm)	23	15	Normal	Index 2.75 20 Alpha P205 (16 units/acre). Maintenance.
Potassium (ppm)	234	181	Normal	Index 2.5 Adequate level for grazing system.
Macronutrient Index	250	51	High	Index 4.5 Possible interference with availability of Potassium.
Calcium (ppm)	1484	2000	Low	If phloem use Calcium Limestone.
Sulphur (ppm)	7	10	Low	Consider treatment for optimum grass growth.
Manganese (ppm)	27.2	20.0	Normal	Adequate level:
Copper (ppm)	5.1	6.0	Low	PRIORITY FOR EQUINE NUTRITION (see comments below).
Boron (ppm)	1.95	0.50	Normal	Adequate level:
Zinc (ppm)	2.7	7.0	Low	PRIORITY FOR EQUINE NUTRITION (see comments below).
Molybdenum (ppm)	0.33	<0.50	Normal	Adequate level:
Iron (ppm)	1477	50	Normal	Adequate level:
Sodium (ppm)	37	90	Normal	PRIORITY FOR EQUINE NUTRITION (see comments below).
C.E.C. (meq/100g)	12.5	15.0	Slightly Low	Cation Exchange Capacity indicates a slightly low nutrient holding ability - soil applied nutrients could be readily washed. Where possible foliar applied nutrients should be recommended.

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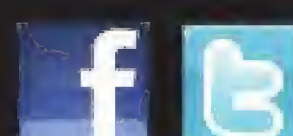
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# Great British Food 2016

British farming produces fantastic, fresh produce that tastes great while supporting rural economies. That's why farming organisations have teamed up to celebrate 2016's 'Year of Great British Food', writes **Guy Whitmore**



**Words by:**  
**Guy Whitmore**  
Guy loves walking in the countryside with his dogs and has a strong interest in farming and rural affairs

**A** **S 2016 IS THE** Year of Great British Food, the NFU has teamed up with the AHDB, Red Tractor and Love British Food to launch a calendar of events to celebrate our nation's produce.

As Countryside is as passionate about farming as it is about the nation's food, it's urging readers to get involved in the events and support Britain's farmers and growers.

The series of events, which was launched by food and farming secretary Liz Truss, will take place between September and November of this year, and will start with the NFU's Back British Farming day in September.

After this, there will be a packed schedule of events up and down the UK to celebrate quality assured, British food. This will include Red Tractor Week, British Food Fortnight, and a 12-week Red Tractor promotion.

Here, Countryside talks to the leaders of the four key organisations behind the initiative, to find out why they're supporting it, and why they're passionate about backing British food.

## **Minette Batters** **NFU Deputy President**

"These are unprecedented and challenging times for British farmers, with the impact of low prices

decimating some farming businesses, so it's never been more important to champion the fantastic British food that we produce.

"Despite these challenges, I want our farmers and growers to be the supplier of choice for British retail, food service and export. Through the Red Tractor scheme, Britain produces food that meets the most comprehensive and respected standards in the world, with the highest levels of product safety and traceability.

"Every farming sector has its own unique story to tell, and, as primary producers, they are at the very heart of a healthy, balanced diet.

"Farmers do all this at the same time as they're

caring for and cherishing our glorious landscape. This means Britain's farmers not only produce great food, they also make a major contribution to the country's economy by creating jobs in rural communities through their businesses, and attracting millions of tourists to those communities by maintaining the nation's beautiful and diverse landscapes.

"I'm pleased to see these farming organisations joining forces; it's important to champion great British food and the thousands of farmers and growers who produce it every day of every year."

  
**CELEBRATE**  
**GREAT**  
**BRITISH**  
**FOOD**  




## Alexia Robinson Founder of Love British Food

“Love British Food is delighted that the whole farming industry is uniting to celebrate British food. We’ve been doing this on our own since 2002 when British Food Fortnight was founded in response to the foot-and-mouth crisis that brought farming to its knees.

“We have a full programme of events, including Cake for The Queen for schools and Great British Feasts for communities this summer, after which autumn kicks off with our British Food Fortnight competition that we run with The Telegraph to find the most imaginative celebration of British food.

“It will be judged by MP Liz Truss, Defra Secretary of State, and Raymond Blanc, and whole towns have been inspired to take part in previous years, with Peterborough winning last year.

“We’re also running pilots in the hospital and school catering sectors, to prove that it’s affordable, and, indeed, profitable, to make British the first supplier of choice. Our campaign to reinvigorate the tradition of Harvest Festival continues with our Harvest Torch travelling from Canterbury to Lincoln, with a special message of support from HRH The Duchess of Cornwall going to harvest festivals across the country.”

## Christine Watts AHDB chief communications officer

“We’re pleased to be involved in celebrating the great food produced in this country.

“We are a nation of food lovers and at AHDB we know that lifestyle demands mean that people have less time to prepare meals. This is why we have been working hard developing new ideas such as mini-roasts, which provide a quick and easy way to cook a roast dinner in less than 30 minutes.”

## Richard Cattell Red Tractor

“Red Tractor is delighted to be a leading part of this autumn’s calendar of consumer activity. We know that consumers are increasingly looking for reassurances over the standards their food is produced to and where it comes from.

“With the Red Tractor scheme and logo, we have a well-established, ready-made solution for them, so now is a great time to launch a concerted campaign to highlight all that’s great about the food produced in the UK.

“Ultimately, we want to give consumers an even better understanding of the good standards to which assured food is produced to, build loyalty to the Red Tractor logo and positively affect their purchasing decisions.

“Involving farmers is a crucial part of the campaign – they can add their passion and pride by being ambassadors for the industry. Together we have the passion to bring the story of where our food comes from to life.”

● Watch out for more on Great British Food 2016 and visit: [nfuonline.com/back-british-farming](http://nfuonline.com/back-british-farming)



Summer is on its way so now is the time to make the most of evening strolls after work, or going camping in the great outdoors with friends. Either way, it’s a great chance to get out and about in our beautiful British countryside.

Farmers are instrumental in producing our food, as well as creating and maintaining beautiful landscapes for us all to enjoy. And it’s this very farmland that creates the food we enjoy, day in day out.

But did you know that three-quarters of Britain is farmland? One of the roles of our ‘Love Your Countryside’ campaign is to ensure that we all follow the Countryside Code and use the great outdoors responsibly.

The code lists some very simple rules that are straightforward to follow, the main principles of which are ‘respect, protect, enjoy’.

### Respect

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors.
- Remember your actions can affect people’s lives and livelihoods.
- Leave gates and property as you find them, and follow paths unless wider access is available.

### Protect

- We all have a responsibility to protect the countryside now and for future generations, so make sure you don’t harm animals, birds, plants or trees.
- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under effective control and when out with your dog make sure it’s not a danger or nuisance to farm animals, horses, wildlife or other people.

### Enjoy

- Plan ahead and be prepared. Even when going out locally, it’s best to get the latest information about where and when you can go. For example, your rights to go onto some areas of open access land and coastal land may be restricted in particular places at particular times.
- Follow advice and local signs. Find out as much as you can about where you are going and plan ahead.

### Further information

Visit: [gov.co.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code](http://gov.co.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code)

For Love Your Countryside, visit: [nfuonline.com/back-british-farming](http://nfuonline.com/back-british-farming)



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# View from the farm: July

Farmers are gearing up for this year's harvest, says **Trevor Foss**

**AS A FARMER** I know that the industry is going through a difficult period of prices for milk, beef and corn, which are now at a level we received 30 years ago. This, together with the ongoing problems with the Rural Payments Agency, has put many farm businesses in a critical position.

I have counted up the number of companies we dealt with here at the farm during one year's trading. The total surprised me at just over 65 different companies. What I'm trying to say is when farming suffers, belts get tightened generally, money is not spent and cutbacks are made.

So what will we doing on the farm in July? We may well still be making hay, unless we're blessed with lots of June sunshine.

Once that's all stacked in the barn, work starts on getting the kit ready for harvesting. Tractors get oil changes and serviced ready for the long hours harvest demands. Next, the combine harvester will be given a full service and thorough check. I'm not sure how many V-belts or chain drives mine has, but replacing any worn or cracked ones now is far better than a breakdown in the middle of harvest.

With three fields of winter barley to cut, a hot dry spell will turn the crop from a sea of waving green to a bright golden colour very quickly.

As the grain ripens, so the moisture content of the grain reduces. When selling, this must be below 15%, but waiting for it to dry can lead to the crop necking over. Due to the weight of grains in the ear, it can bend the stem in half. The result is the ear, instead of being at the top of the plant and easy to harvest, can actually neck so far over that it's very near or even touching the ground. In this position, the ear can be difficult to harvest.

Meanwhile, the straw that's left behind the combine will be baled for the cattle to have next winter.

Away from the fields, I have been a local assessor for the NFU Mutual for a number of years now

dealing with farmers' insurance claims.

The last three claims I dealt with typify some of the issues we face when dealing with rural crime. One was for the theft of ewes with young lambs. The farmer, having spent many long hours looking after his flock as they lambed, had been rewarded with a nice crop of lambs. The criminals had simply indiscriminately rounded up a bunch from a larger group one night. Without a care, they had taken some ewes leaving behind their lambs and taken some lambs leaving their mothers.

Another claim was for several sheep that had been butchered in the field, taking the meat, and leaving the farmer to find the remains.

One not involving animals was for criminal damage to winter feed in the form of silage bales. Someone had climbed up on to a stack of wrapped bales and slashed the plastic on many of the top bales resulting in these bales being unfit to use. Absolutely mindless damage caused the loss of animal feed and a waste of all the hard work in producing it.

On a happier note, the swallows that come back to the same stable each year have been busy and now have many hungry mouths to feed. They swoop in and out so quickly that I'm amazed there is never a collision.

We even have a robin nesting with five chicks in our front porch perched in the top of a flowerpot. It seems quite happy sitting tight only a foot away from anyone coming to the front door. We did, however, barricade the porch when they were feeding their young chicks.

Finally, I'm pleased to report that my wife, Pat, and granddaughter Lucy heard a cuckoo in May, while out walking one morning – a first after several blank years. ♀



**Trevor Foss** runs a mixed farm in Northamptonshire and has been involved with the NFU for a number of years

**DOORSTEP NATURE:** Pat's patience pays off as she captures the robin in their porch returning with a worm to feed its chicks





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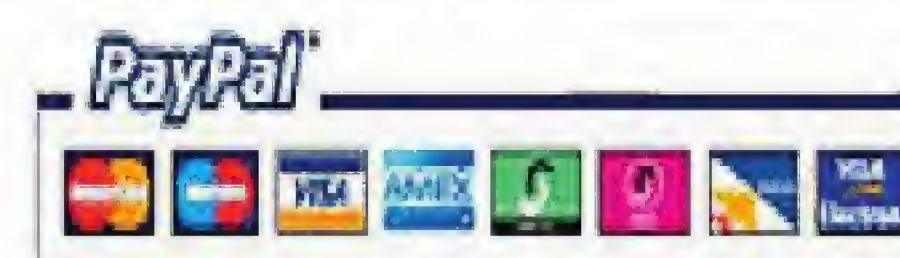
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# Farmer Tim

The new Farmer Tim book is out this month! Get ready for another adventure on Puddle Farm involving lots of different types of machinery.

'The Big Crane Adventure' sees Farmer Tim and his family without any electricity as the generator stops working. Tim's dad decides to get the electricity company to put in pylons and connect the house to a proper supply. This involves asking a neighbor to dig six large holes with his digger. It's raining and the digger is on a slippery slope for the last hole. But it's just too steep and the digger topples over.

A friend with a large tractor tries to pull the digger back upright, but gets stuck in the mud. Then Tim, come up with a great idea. Why not get a crane to rescue the tractor and digger?

The Big Crane Adventure is a great fun read and is one of Tim's most exciting stories yet, as his idea helps to save the day.



## Win a copy of The Big Crane Adventure

We have 5 copies of The Big Crane Adventure to give away. To be in with a chance of winning, simply match the names to the different items of farm machinery, pictured below, and send your answers and full details to: Crane Adventure Competition c/o Heather Lewis, Countryside magazine, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire CV8 2TZ or email [heather.lewis@nfu.org.uk](mailto:heather.lewis@nfu.org.uk). Closing date is 13 July 2016 and for full terms and conditions, visit: [countrysideonline.co.uk](http://countrysideonline.co.uk)



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

**Machinery names:** Quad bike, Crane, Plough, Digger, Combine harvester, Tractor, Muck spreader, Trailer

## Further information

The Big Crane Adventure by Tim Lerwill is available at [farmertim.com](http://farmertim.com) along with the series of Farmer Tim adventure books. Farmer Tim is also featured in the Welly Club in the Kids Zone of [countrysideonline.co.uk](http://countrysideonline.co.uk)



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## Walk. Ride. Fly

The groundscape market is one of the most conservative (small 'c') markets there is. Customers tend to stick with what they know and buy 'more of the same'. Time to break the mould, then? **Malcolm Bates** lines-up three different machines to encourage you to 'think outside the box'

**M**Y PROBLEM? I worry too much. I spend my life looking at kit that might be right up your street. Or in this case, 'on your grass.' I read through endless press releases, visit trade shows, then try to make sense of it all. But are my assumptions right?

It might help if I practiced what I preached. Truth is, when I'm not testing some wizzo new kit on your behalf, you'll probably find me mowing my own lawn with an old prototype battery-powered Viking pedestrian mower. Or cutting the paddock out the back with an equally-aged Hyundai pedestrian wheeled strimmer.

Why? It takes me ages. Truth be told, I like using things I'm comfortable with. And when it comes to mowers and other garden machinery, I suspect that's true of many of us. But when we finally pension-off a much-loved friend? Our first reaction is to trot down to our local dealer and look for the nearest thing to it.

The moral of the story this month? Don't do that. At least not until you've poked your head above the technological innovation parapet to see what else is now available. True, unless you've recently moved

house, the grassed areas you have today are probably much the same as they were five, or more, years ago. But the kit available today most certainly isn't. 'The same', that is.

Brands rise and fall. New trends filter down from the 'Pro' market to the 'Semi-pro' sector. The next big thing? How about its extended warranty packages - or better still, 'fixed price' maintenance contracts? If the idea works with a new car, why not on a new tractor, or mower?

Mind you, one good thing has come out of my using 'comfortable' old - but slow - machinery. It's given me time to reflect. Are new generation pedestrian machines more productive? Can the latest ride-on garden tractors work in tighter spaces? And instead of a compact tractor and mower deck, could a zero-turn 'flying machine' work better on wider areas of amenity grass?

After a phone call to Ian Seager, marketing manager at EP Barrus, the UK distributor of the Club Cadet range, three totally different machines from this diverse - but often overlooked - range have arrived to help provide some answers. So let's fire 'em up...



# Making a fresh start

## Cub Cadet 'Triloy' Pedestrian Mower

- Model tested - CC53SPBVIS electric start Triloy pedestrian mower with variable speed control (drive), electric start, three-part (galvanised steel/aluminium) 12-inch (53cm) deck. Engine - Briggs & Stratton 775 EX Series with push-button (lithium-ion battery) 'Readystart' as standard. Folding 'soft grip' handles, 80-litre collector. Six-position deck height control. Weight 53kg.
- Price as tested £749 inc VAT. Available from EP Barras, Bicester, Oxon.
- Call 0845 273 9730 for more product information and your nearest dealer location. Machine supplied by Simply Machinery Limited, Letchworth, Herts.

It's daft when you think about it - only three things make a petrol engine go - air, fuel and a spark. After more than a hundred years of development, you'd think most manufacturers would have got the theory by now, wouldn't you?

Some engines need choke. Most now have an automatic system. Some need a bit of throttle. Others none. Most now don't even give the user a chance to fiddle. But if the engine doesn't fire first, or second pull? Sweating over a recoil cord start on a hot, humid day is enough to spoil your weekend.

Electric start then? Will something left in your shed for five months start first time - like some sort of horticultural 'Herbie' the VW Beetle? That was just a film. It wasn't real life.

'Click. Vroom. Putter, putter, putter...' Gosh. I've just prodded the button on the new Triloy Series CC53SPBVIS pedestrian mower and... Well, as you can hear for yourself, it's now ticking over a treat.

Unlike most mowers I get on test, I haven't had

**RIGHT:** The Triloy is well made and was very easy to start. It made light work of Malcolm's lawn

**BELOW:** Malcolm fits the mulching plug

to assemble it first from a flatpack box of bits. So just for fun, I took it apart and re-assembled it anyway. Brilliant. Nicely made. The handlebar locking mechanism (to enable it to be folded for storage, when not in use) is right up there with the best.

All that's left over is a bit of red plastic... Oh, right, it's the ignition key, which activates the push-button starter. It's designed to ensure no over-eager five-year-old takes it for an unauthorised spin. 'Elf & Safety,' y'see. But actually, it's a sound idea. Especially if your prized azaleas are in the firing line.



**NO MESS:** Malcolm fits the deck mulch plug



**NEW TECHNOLOGY:** The Instart electric starter pack

## VERDICT

The deck height adjuster is suitably 'chunky'. The grassbox design works well - even on wet grass it doesn't block up - but the deck can also be used in mulching mode as well. It features a clever fan to produce a fine mulch. The 'speed adjuster' is great, but the one single feature that will make you want to embrace some new technology? That Briggs & Stratton 'In-Start' engine with rechargeable lithium-ion start battery module. It worked every time, but even if it didn't, it can be removed for charging in a trice.

Moans? The usual - none of the manufacturers seem to consider the need for an 'on-board' clip for the mulching plug when it's not in use. Surely, having to leave it in the shed, is the first step in losing it? Or is that just me?

That aside? It does more work with less effort. It's a good 'un.



# U-turn if you want to

## Cub Cadet '1000 Series' Hydrostatic Garden Tractor

● Model tested - CC1018BHE hydrostatic garden tractor with 36-inch, rear discharge deck. Powered by a Briggs & Stratton 'Intek' V-twin petrol engine. Twelve position (manual) deck height control. 280-litre tipping grass box. Machine weight 227kg.  
 ● Price as tested £3,299 inc VAT. ● Available from EP Barras, Bicester, Oxon. Call 0845 273 9730 for more product information and your nearest dealer location. Test machine supplied by Simply Machinery Limited, Letchworth, Herts.

Hang on, this job is turning out to be harder than I imagined when writing the introduction. There are more than 20 different garden tractor models in the Club Cadet range, in four different 'Series'.

After a morning mulling over the spec sheets with my local Club Cadet dealer, Ross MacLeod at Simply Machinery Limited, I'm about to find out if the little CC1018BHE really is, as he suggests, the best of both worlds - a ride-on with the 'chuckability' of a pedestrian machine.

Of course, had I shown more foresight, I'd have made sure there was enough room to get - if not a full-sized tractor - then a decent compact and mower deck between the house and the garage I built some years back. At the time, four feet seemed plenty. Several years on? It's become a pain because a four-foot wide tractor won't squeeze through a four-foot wide gap, so... That limits what I can use on the rear paddock. Result? To save damage, it's kept me using pedestrian machines instead of ride-ons ever since.

So here's the little CC1018BHE. With a 650cc V-twin Briggs & Stratton 'Intek' engine, it's the smallest of the fully-hydrostatic Cub Cadet '1000 Series' models. It comes with a 36-inch cut-width deck, so it should get through that gap.

As with any machine aimed at the American market, we have the obligatory 'beverage holder', but of more practical use is that little lever next to the 12-position deck-height setting control. It's the grassbox 'jiggler paddle' - or in American, a 'Clean-out system'.



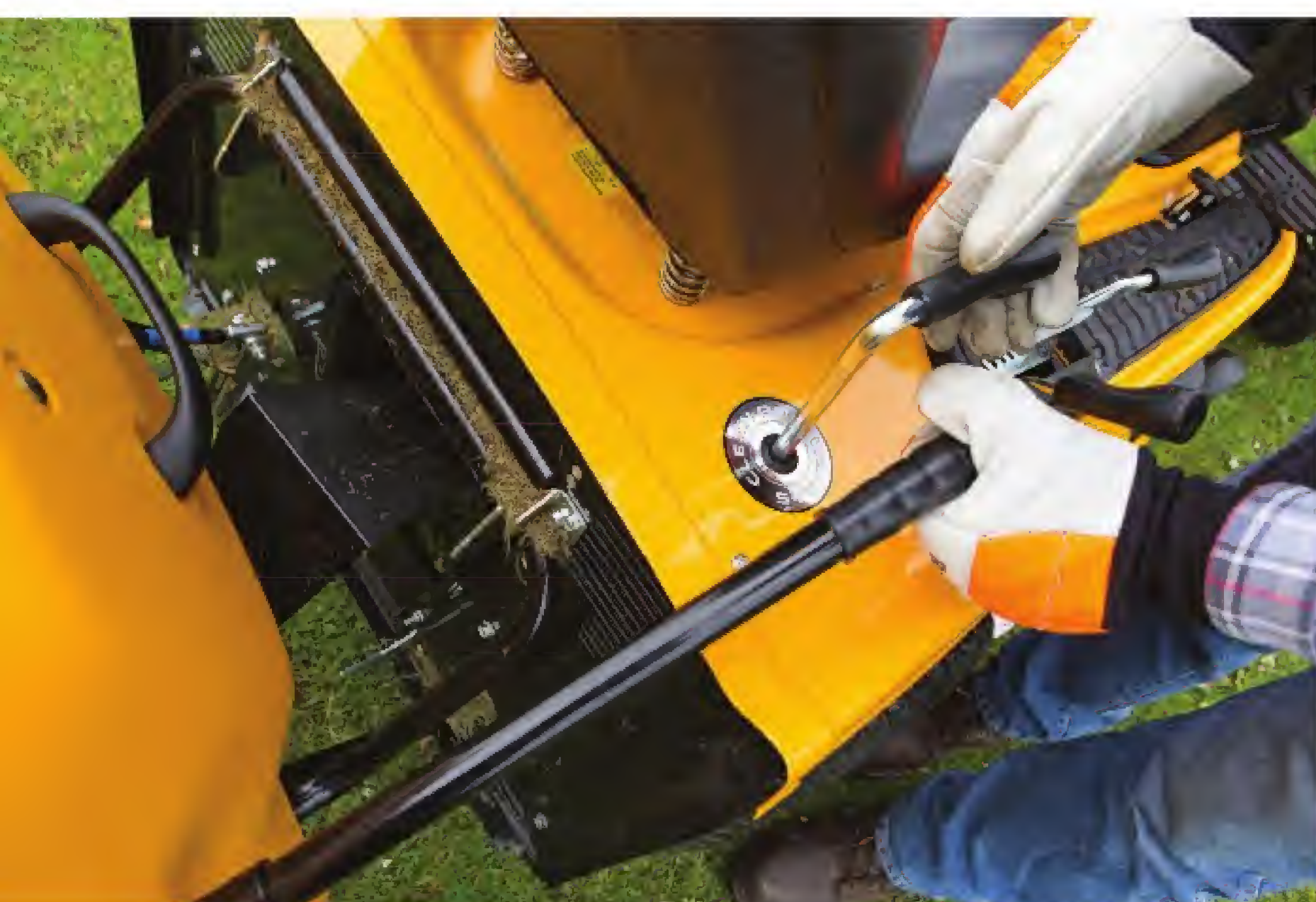
Whatever you want to call it, it ensures you get a full grassbox every time.

But there are two other key features that make this rear discharge garden tractor an ideal 'first ride-on' - the amazingly tight 16-inch/40cm inside turning radius, which enables a 'once around a tree capability'. And? The ability to mow in reverse. Just in case you couldn't quite make it in one!



**VERSATILE:**  
 'For the ups and downs of your lawn...'

...the twin-bladed deck has 12 height settings'



## VERDICT

The Club Cadet garden tractor range starts with the 30-inch/76cm cut width, single-cylinder 420cc 714TC in the '700 Series' and goes up to the 54-inch/137cm cut-width GTX2100. Moans? I'd have gladly swapped that 'beverage holder' for a handy mobile phone/Mars bar 'storage facility'. And would have liked the seat armrests as fitted to the GTX2100. But the ability to mow in reverse really can save time - especially if you have trees to mow around. That tight turning radius and impressive grassbox capacity underlined what I'd been missing. Aside from a seat, that is.

Bottom line? Why walk when you can ride?



# A tank on your lawn

## 'SZ60 Tank' Zero Turn Mower

● Model tested - SZ60 Zero-Turn hydrostatic mower. Deck cutting width - 60-inch (152cm). Power unit 'FX Series' Kawasaki V-twin. Weight 590kg. ● Price as tested £9,999 inc VAT (smaller RZTS42 priced from £3,499). Available from EP Barras, Bicester, Oxon. ● Call 0845 273 9730 for more product information and your nearest dealer location. ● Test machine supplied by Simply Machinery Limited, Letchworth, Herts.

We need to start with a clarification. In the same way that motorists, increasingly frustrated by the insidious spread of 'sleeping policemen' and 20mph speed zone restrictions, might be tempted to drive a very large tracked military vehicle through endless lines of traffic cones to make a point - c'mon don't pretend you haven't thought about it - it's namesake, the 'SZ60 Tank' has an equally non-compromising stance. It's not for those happy to 'mediate' with their grass. With this bad boy, your long grass is going to get it. It's history.

But is it, as the name suggests, a beast to drive? Nope. Quite the reverse, in fact, because while some professional machines can take some learning and can seem intimidating to 'Semi-pro' users, 'the Tank' has a unique secret weapon - a steering wheel.

In a world where 'zero-turn' machines normally come with a left and right hand 'tiller' which also regulates the direction and actual speed of travel, in contrast, the Tank driver twirls a wheel to steer and uses his/her feet to do the speed/braking stuff. Result? Amazing!

Starting from a position of general grumpiness - after all, it took me years to learn how to drive a zero-turn machine in anger - I soon forgot I was driving a zero-turn wheelmotor-driven machine where the



front castor wheels do no more than hold the front of the machine off the ground. Surely, a hefty twirl on that wheel at high speed could send you into orbit? Or worse, underneath 500kg of Tank? Er, yes in theory.

But in practice, stability wasn't an issue. In fact, having a wheel to hang on to was a positive advantage in safety terms.

**ABOVE:** The deck can be quickly raised to miss obstructions



**UNIQUE:** Unlike other Zero-turn machines, the 'Tank' has an adjustable steering wheel

## VERDICT

We Brits love to suggest the Americans 'don't do irony', don't we? Not true. Although hardly a 'pussycat', 'The Tank' isn't as intimidating to drive as the name suggests.

Moans? A three-cylinder diesel isn't an option. Pity. But the big 850cc Kawasaki V-twin petrol engine is relaxed in use and free (ish) from vibration. Being air-cooled, it's noisier than a water-cooled unit, however. Mowing performance is awesome - and it's very fast. Conclusion? The Tank fits the brief of looking at what

else is available on the market before 'buying more of the same'. It offers a unique combination of features. But if a 60-inch deck is too wide? Try the 42-inch cut 'RZT-S'.

Final word? As of next month, the garden machinery market slows up a bit, so the dealers (of all brands) will be increasingly keen to shift this year's stock before autumn. So? There could be some cracking deals to be had. And you could be in the driving seat. Get in there!



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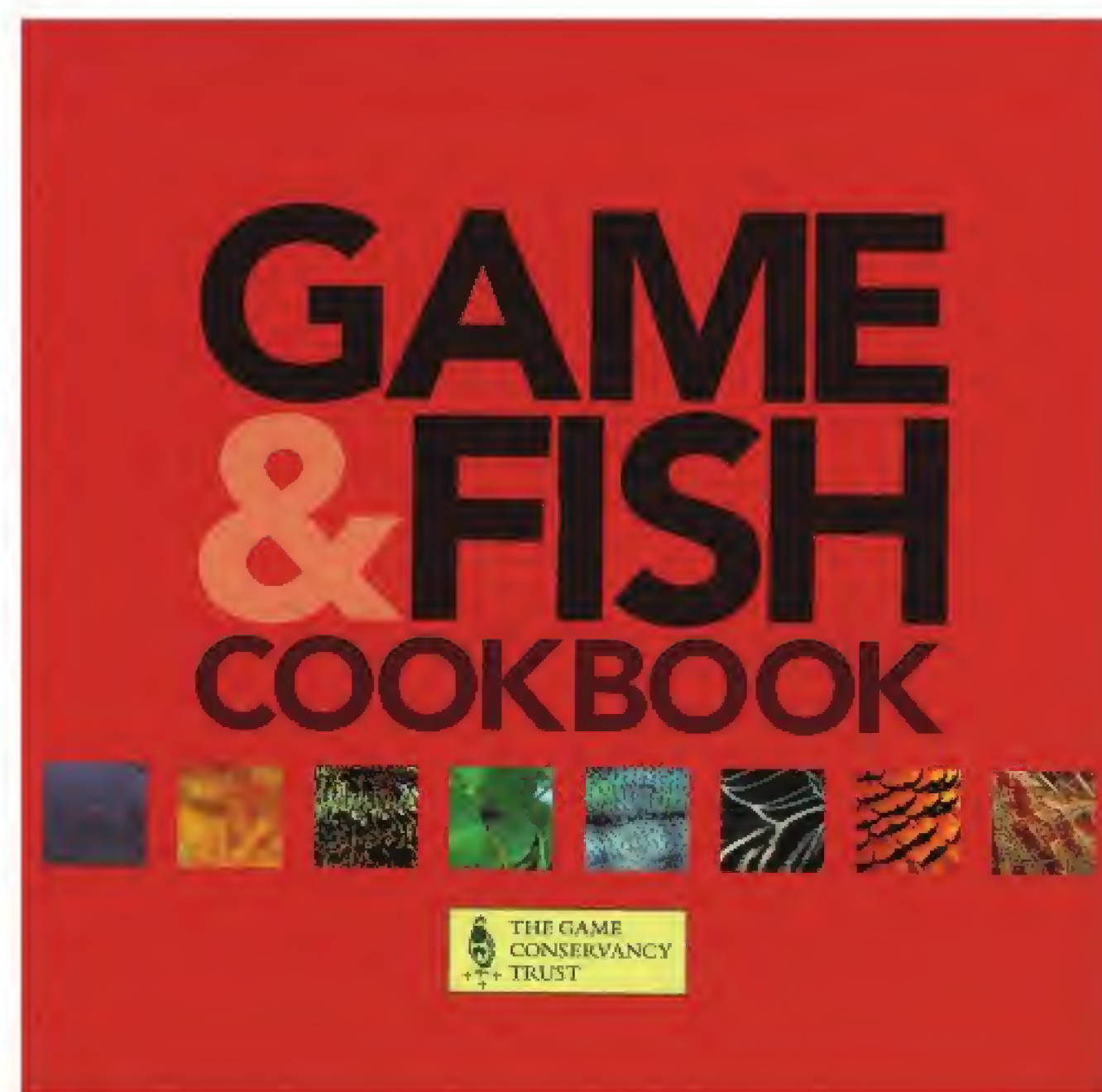


## Game & Fish Cookbook

By Barbara Thompson with Liz Scott of The Game Conservancy Trust

● Published by Quiller Publishing Ltd, priced £25

This beautifully-presented 287-page cookbook has been updated and revised with exciting ideas for every game and fish recipe imaginable. From pigeon with red cabbage and chestnuts to trout en croute and hot game pie, it will have your mouth watering. The recipes are clearly set out alongside stunning photography to illustrate the modern and imaginative recipes from cooks, including Rick Stein, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and Prue Leith. It also includes handy sections on the best places to buy game, how to prepare it and what to drink with each dish!

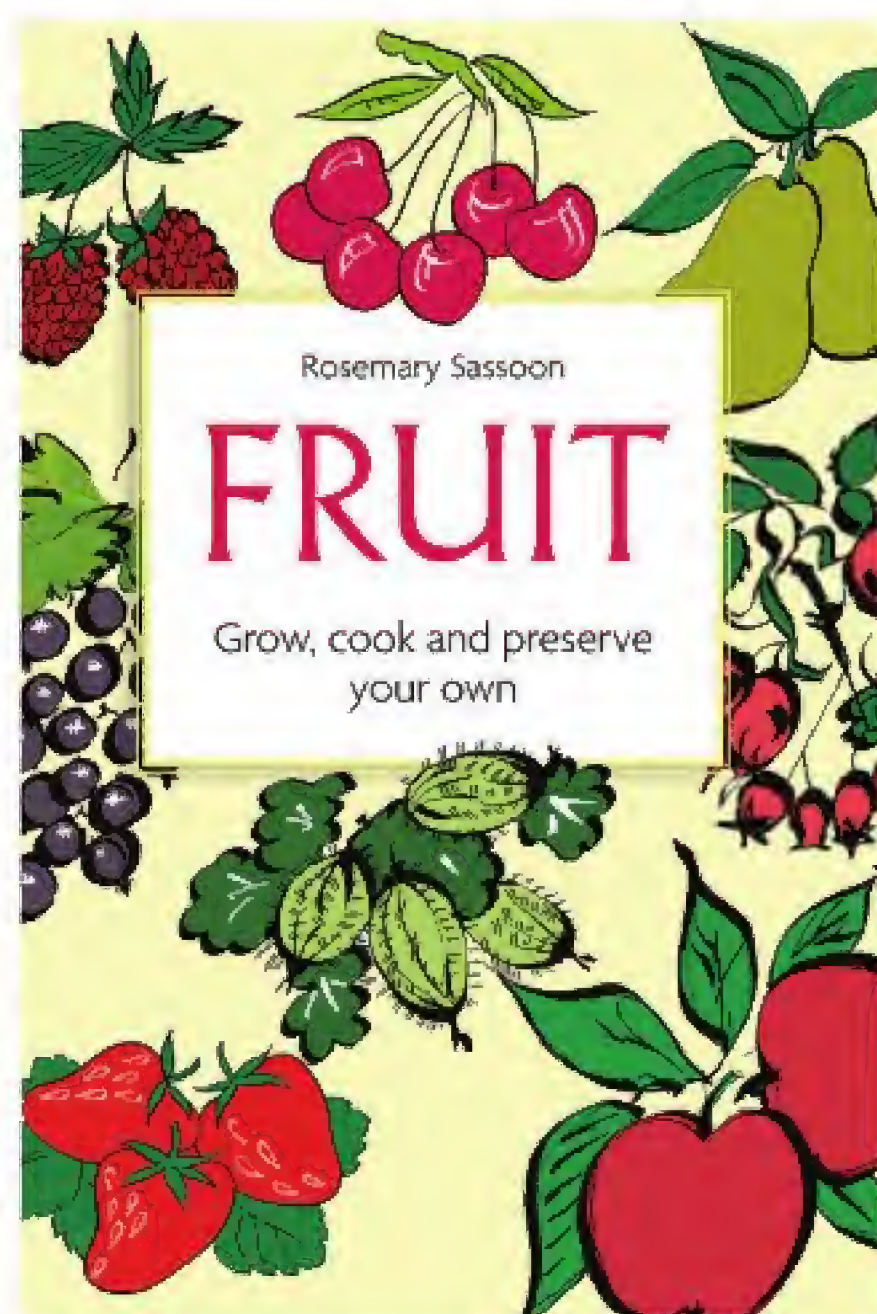


## Fruit: Grow, Cook and Preserve Your Own

By Rosemary Sassoon

● Published by The Book Guild Ltd, priced £9.95

From gooseberries and raspberries to rhubarb and damsons, there's few things more rewarding than growing your own. This practical pocketbook advises on what to grow and how to use your fresh produce, with tips and techniques on using eco-friendly growing methods. At under 100 pages, it's a slender volume but packed with information.

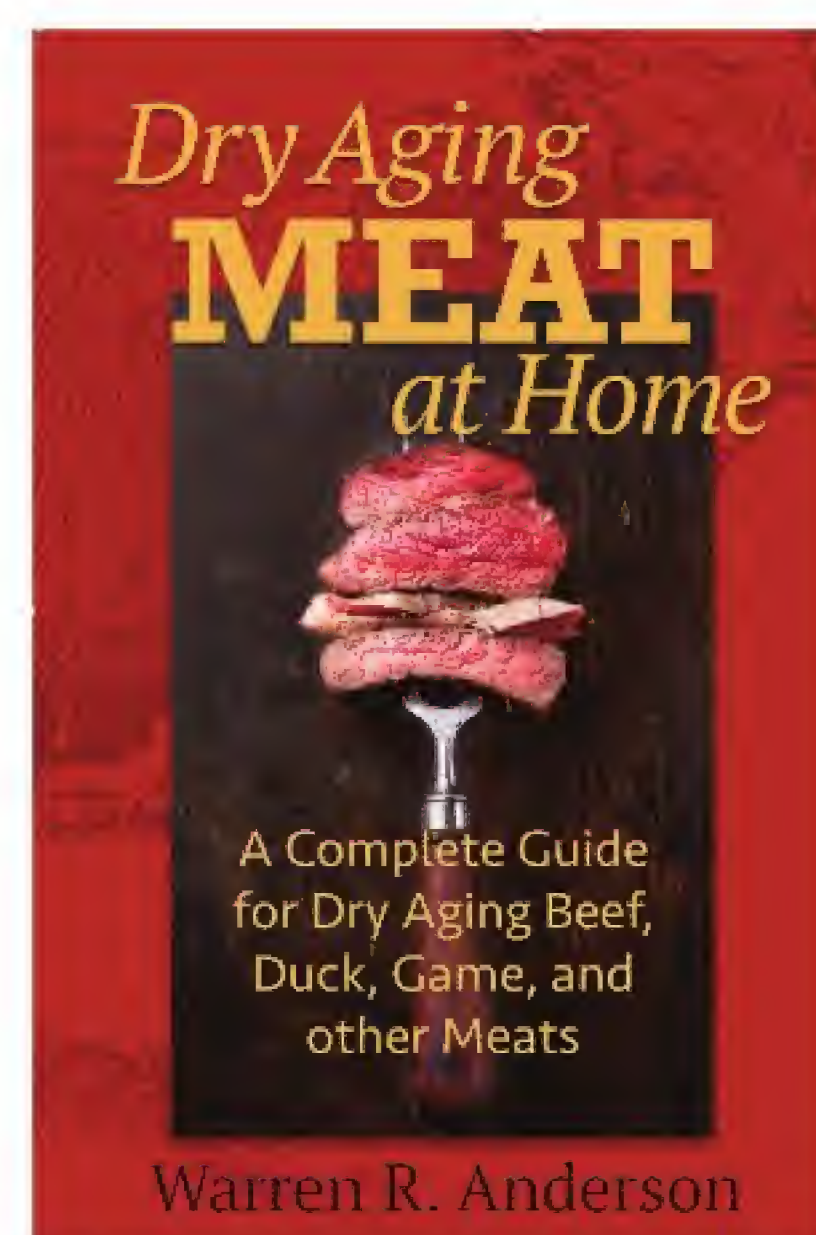


## Dry Ageing Meat at Home

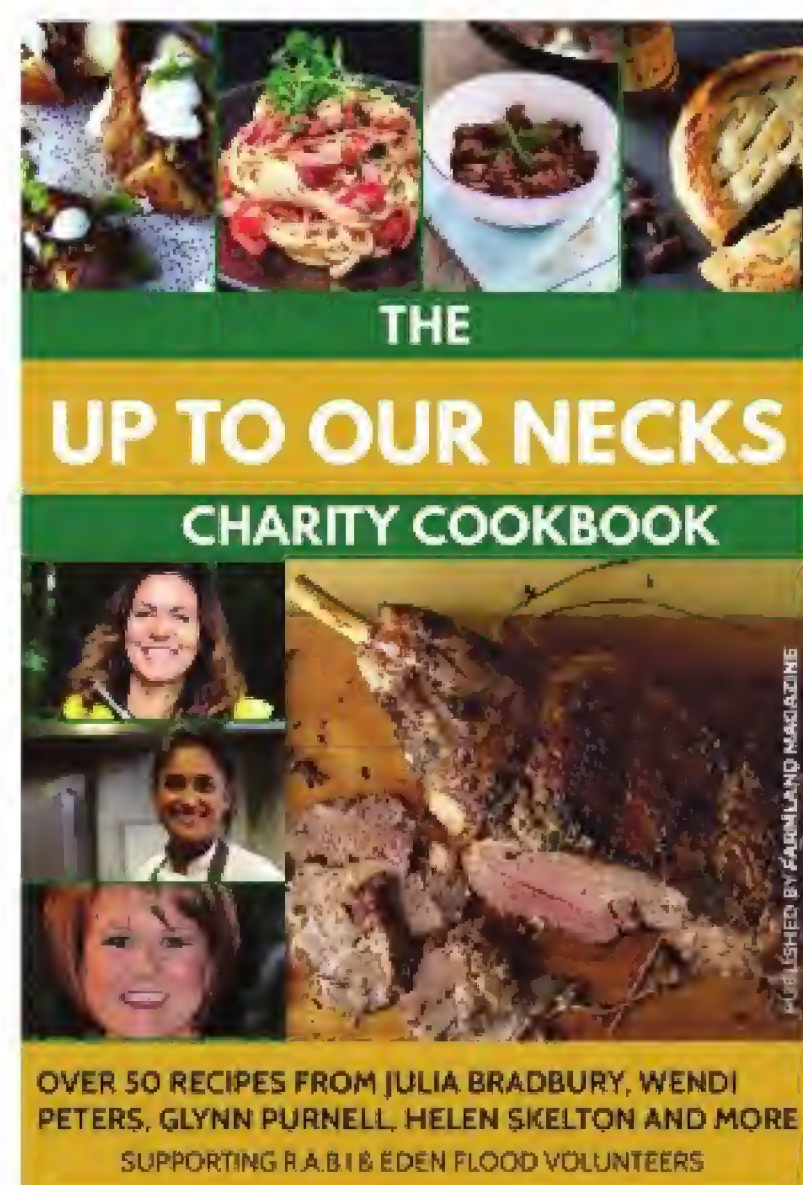
By Warren R. Anderson

● Published by Quiller Publishing Ltd, priced £12.95

For all our meat lovers, this book will inspire those seeking a unique succulence and flavour from their meat through dry-ageing at home. With an easy-to-follow guide, Warren shows us how we can dry-age beef, lamb, game and other meats with just a small fridge, a fan, a remote thermometer and, of course, this book. With advice on health and food safety concerns, as well as which cuts of meat are best, this book will provide you with the necessary tools in order to achieve enhanced flavours and textures.



## Up to Our Necks Charity Cookbook

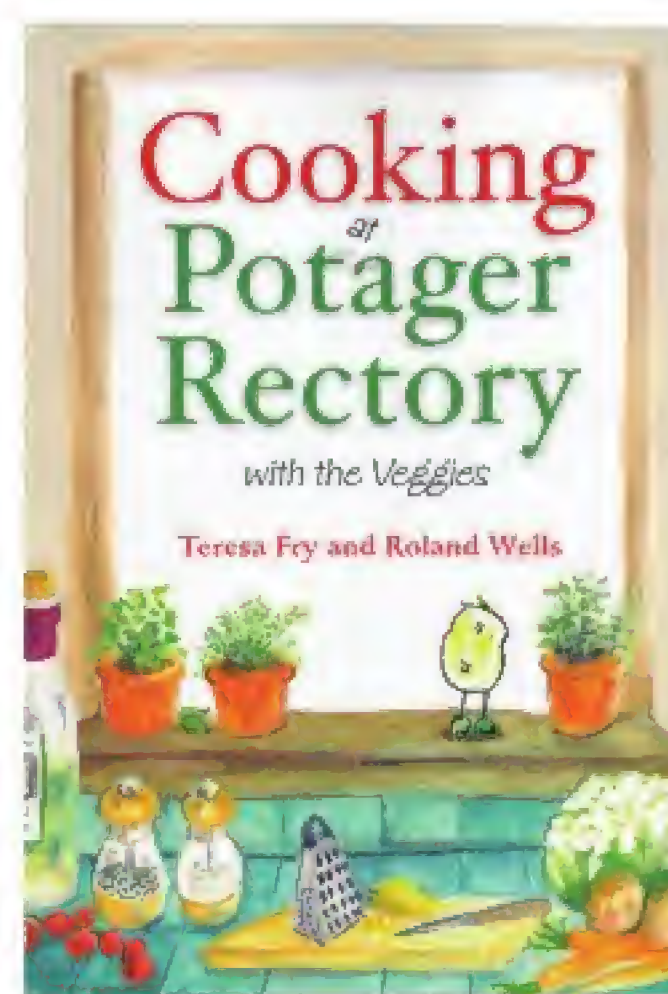


By David Burke, Sandra Stalker and Bryn Thompson

● Published by Farmland Magazine, priced £10 (inc. P&P)

After the devastating floods that affected the North West late last year, Cumbrian farming flood victims, together with local businesses, chefs, celebrities and people from all walks of life, have provided their favourite recipes to produce

this wonderful charity cookbook. Using British produce, the cookbook offers a range of delicious recipes, all of which have a story to tell. The money raised will be donated to RAB and Eden Flood Volunteers for their work in supporting those affected by the floods.

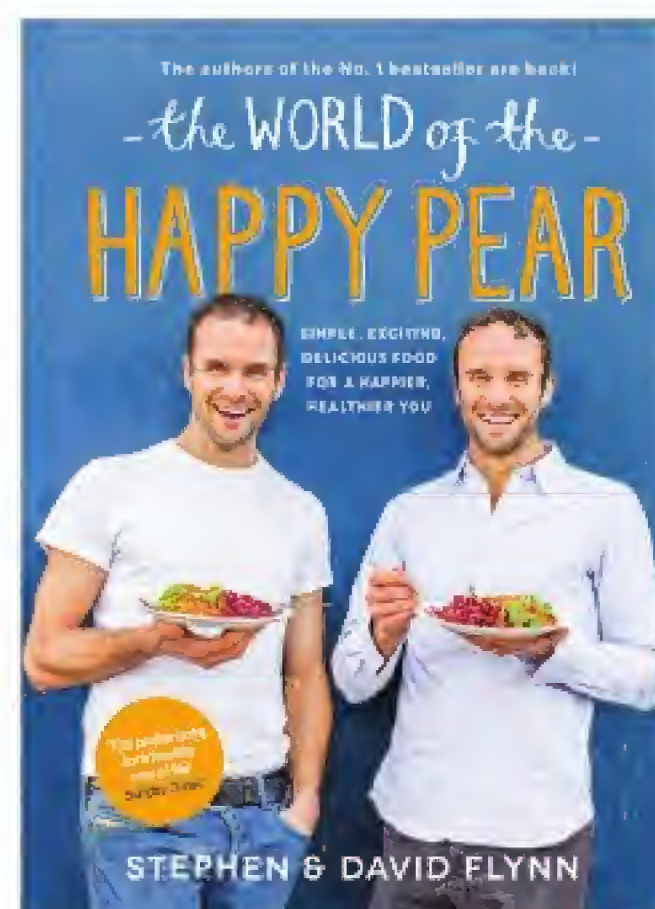


## Cooking at Potager Rectory with the Veggies

By Teresa Fry and Roland Wells

● Published by Imprimata, priced £5.99 (inc. P&P)

Trying to get your children to eat more fruit and vegetables? Then this children's cookbook is the perfect way to do just that. With characters including Tom and Cherry Tomato, Russell Sprout and Broccoli Spears, this beautifully illustrated book provides easy recipes to get cooking with your child. For a copy, please email: [teresa.fry@designconnection.co.uk](mailto:teresa.fry@designconnection.co.uk)



## The World of the Happy Pear

By David and Stephen Flynn

● Published by Penguin Ireland, priced £18.99

"These lovely boys always create incredibly tasty food," says Jamie Oliver. The Flynn twins have put fun and imagination at the heart of their cooking, showing that vegetarian food is endlessly varied, packed full of flavour and easy to prepare. The World of the Happy Pear includes over 100 mouth-watering recipes with colourful photographs, along with tips on how to eat healthily, keep fit and lead a happier life. The Happy Pear café, shop and brand have become iconic, with their first cookbook The Happy Pear being a number one bestseller.



# A true countryman

**Emily Scaife** looks at the work of author and countryside stalwart John Moore

**I**T'S A STRANGE thing when you come to research a novelist, to find out that your own late grandfather wrote their biography. It's even stranger to refer to them by their full name, but as it's inappropriate to reference him as 'granddad', David Cole will have to do.

I knew he had researched and written a book about a writer based in Tewkesbury – mostly because he once accidentally deleted everything he'd written from his computer and nearly gave up on the project altogether – but the penny didn't drop until I began researching John Moore.

There's a distinct possibility that you may not have heard of John Moore. Today, he's perhaps more widely known for his affiliation to Tewkesbury and for founding the Cheltenham Literary Festival, than he is for his novels. But he was a prolific author, once described by Sir Compton Mackenzie as the most talented writer about the countryside of his generation.

Rural life provided the setting for most of his novels, but his interest was far more than simply a literary concern. He was a passionate conservationist and campaigned about a multitude of issues, mostly through the medium of his 'Country Column' for the Birmingham Evening Mail, which he wrote for some 20 years.

Almost a thousand articles in total painted a rural picture for a largely urban

audience and although, on occasion, a few feathers were ruffled, namely about issues such as fox hunting, he had a large and loyal readership.

He passionately believed that the countryside and its way of life should be conserved for the benefit of everyone and that more people should have a better understanding of rural issues.

"The occasional spats did not detract from the column's overall popularity and Moore was always genuinely grateful for the support given by readers to his numerous campaigns over conservation issues," David Cole wrote.

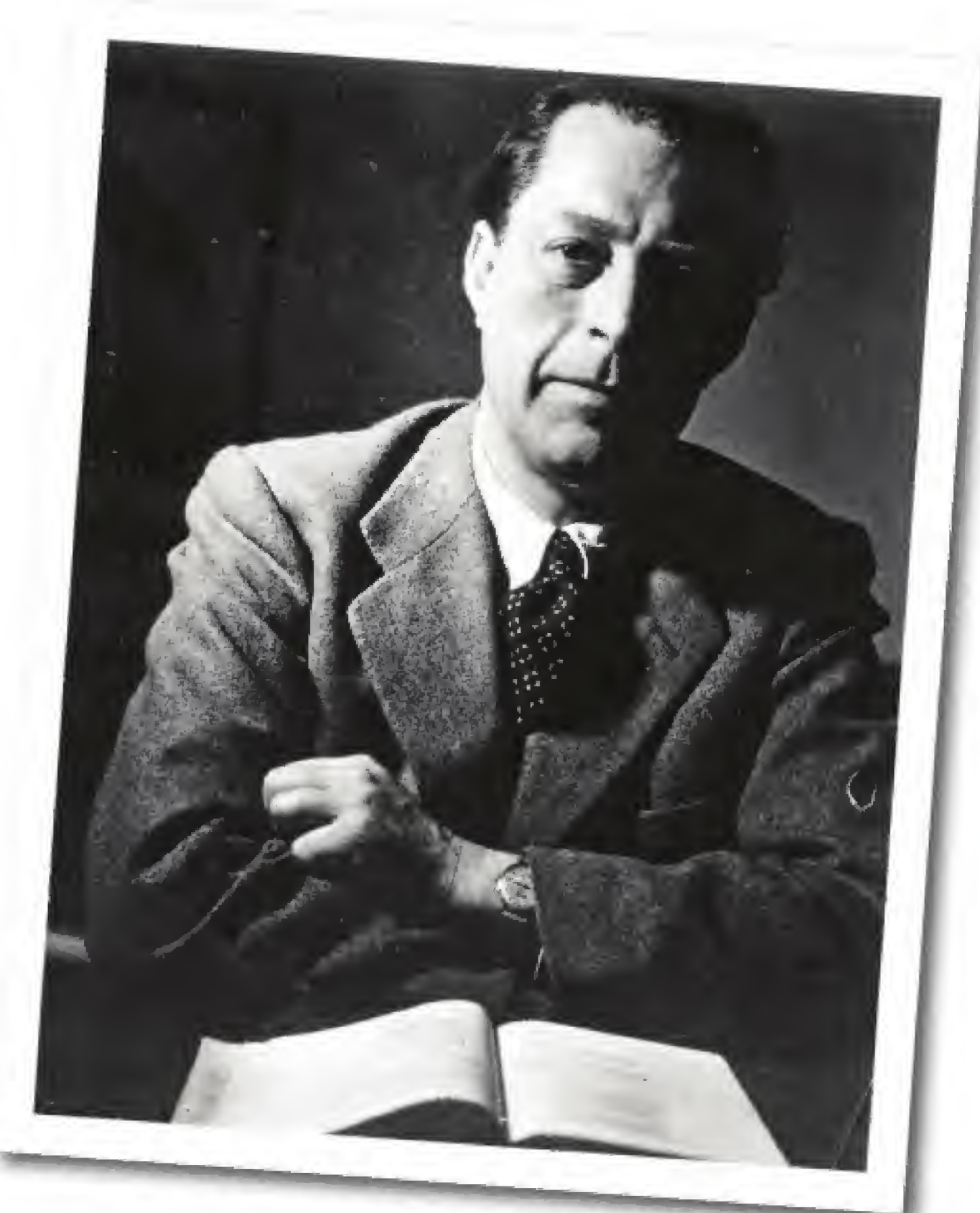
I doubt that many of you will have read, or would even be able to name one of his novels (here's

one, in case it ever comes up in a pub quiz: 'Tramping Through Wales') but he left an indelible mark on the countryside through his campaigning.

Many of his loyal readers lent

their voice to his cause and helped fan the flames of action; his eventual achievements included the sympathetic management of rural roadside vegetation, the use of pesticides, the preservation of hedgerow, trees and wildlife habitats, and the prevention of stubble burning.

He defended the countryside he had grown up in passionately, disliking




practices motivated purely by profit or which displayed a careless regard for the natural world. His legacy is marked by a society and museum, both of which bear his name.

"No-one asks the advice of the ecologist before the flamethrowers and bulldozers move in," he wrote. "The lovely pattern of pastoral England is being destroyed by those who do not realise that it is a compromise between agricultural necessity and an acceptance that the pattern involves some co-existence with some things which compete with humans for food." No doubt he would have been heartened by the efforts farmers make today to maintain our countryside and protect its inhabitants.

If you're passionate about the rural way of life and want to help safeguard those voices that haven't necessarily translated well to the modern age, then consider purchasing a book by John Moore and giving it a go.

It's only fitting that my final word on John Moore is David Cole's final paragraph in his book 'John Moore: True Countryman'. From one countryman to another, he summarises John Moore thus: "For all his desire to be recognised as a famous novelist, John Moore would be more than content with the knowledge that he is best remembered as a true countryman, and by his peers as a thoroughly decent chap."

I think most of us would be happy to be remembered as such. 



**LEGACY:** The John Moore Countryside Museum in Tewkesbury

PHOTO: ALAMY



# Wear it...

As it's our Countryside Kitchen edition, we thought we'd take a look at what to wear at a summer picnic or barbecue, or why not cut a dash at your local fete or food festival. We can hear the fizz tent calling – English sparkling wine and British strawberries, of course...



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● £30  
freddieparker.com

## Cath Kidston Spring Cottage Dress

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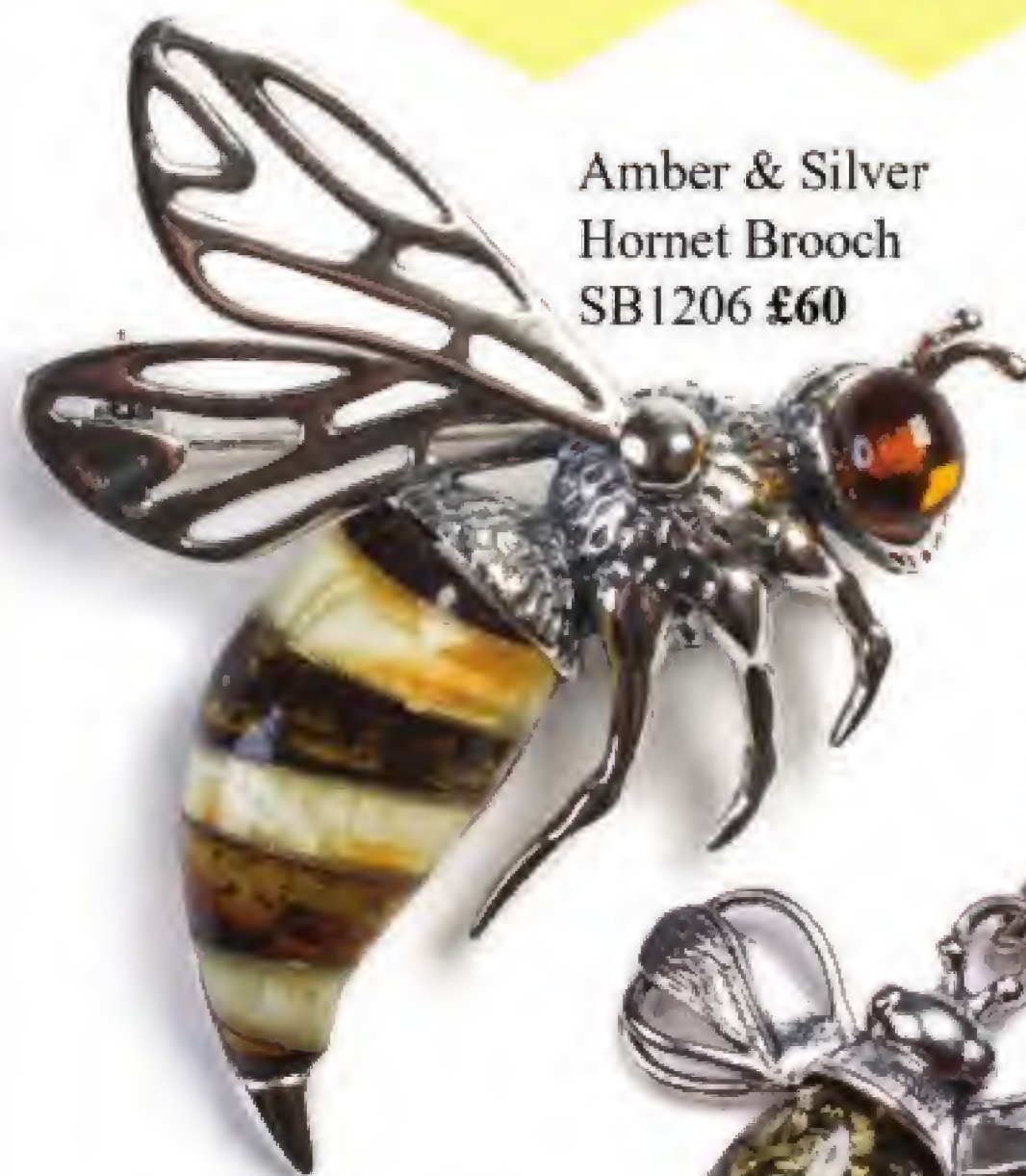
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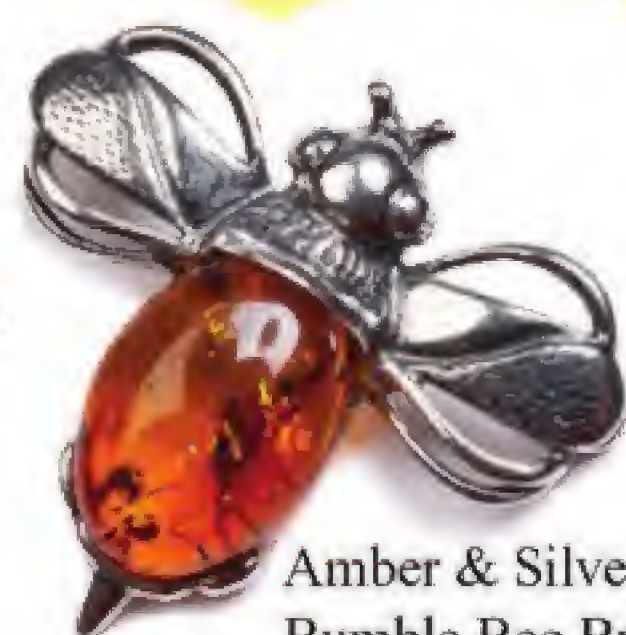
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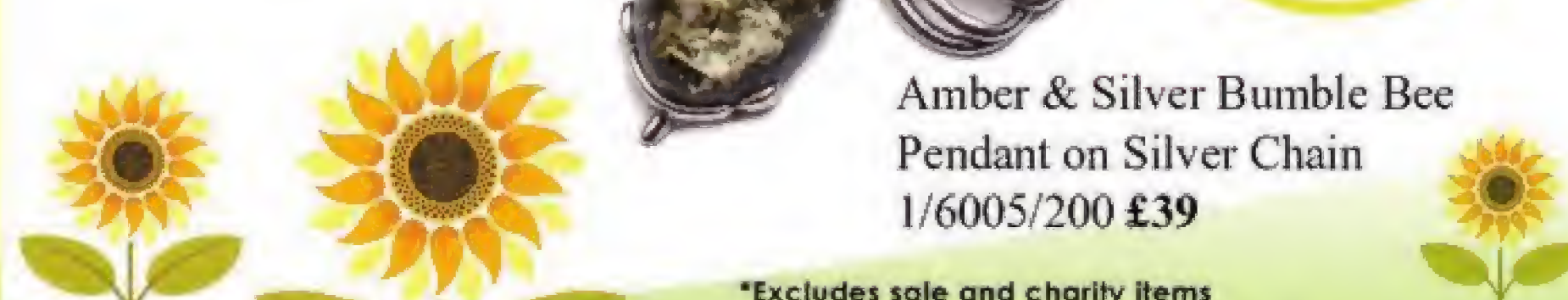
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# Northern delights

History and heritage, both centuries old and much more recent, is everywhere in County Durham, as **James Rudman** discovers

**R**ELIGION, history, heritage, architecture, learning and natural sites are all part of the intriguing blend of attractions that makes the city and county of Durham an appealing place to visit.

## Durham

The city's two most notable landmarks are perched on top of a small peninsula contained within a tight, meandering bow of the River Wear, where they have stood for around 1,000 years.

One of the main focuses of the Durham World Heritage Site is the Norman cathedral, where St Cuthbert and famed Anglo-Saxon scholar The Venerable Bede are buried. The second is the nearby castle, which dates from 1072 and became the Palace for the Bishop of Durham's residence until the 1830s when it was renovated to become the first college of the new Durham University.

Unesco designated the World Heritage Site in 1986 due to the importance of the Norman

architecture and historic links with the role of Prince-Bishops of Durham, a title created in Norman times. This was someone responsible for controlling religious affairs, as well as for defending the border area with Scotland including the power to raise an army.

No wonder that, when you wander on the footpath along the wooded sides of the river looking up at the steep hillside to where the cathedral and castle stand, you can see why this was a defensive stronghold during turbulent centuries between England and Scotland.

Walking along the river is certainly a peaceful way to appreciate the site from a distance. You also find occasional noticeboards providing useful snippets of information, such as indicating where a sealed-up entrance to a coal mine was. Apparently, the peninsula on which the cathedral stands is the only part of the Durham coalfields never to have been mined because the monks were afraid it would be damaged by such work.

The cathedral, mighty and imposing and considered as one of Europe's finest examples of Norman architecture, was built to contain the remains of St Cuthbert in a shrine.

Religious tourism underpinned the importance of this northern England stronghold and built its wealth. Originally a monastic cathedral, the current building dates from



**Words by:**  
**James Rudman**

James is a writer for *Countryside* magazine and loves rugby, travel and walking







**MAJESTIC:** Durham's famous cathedral stands proud above the city, looming large over the River Wear



1093 and has attracted pilgrims to the shrine of St Cuthbert throughout that time. Apparently, the original ornate shine was covered in gold, silver and precious stones given by visitors. It was dismantled by commissioners of Henry VIII in 1537, but replaced in 1542 with a much simpler version.

Visitors today can see the shrine while also enjoying the impressive building with its vaulted ceilings, beautiful stained glass, and an ornate church clock added in about 1632.

Durham Castle has been home to Durham University's University College for about 180 years. It's used to accommodate students, including in the restored keep, but visitors can look around on 45-minute guided tours. These take you to key parts of the site, including a nearly 1,000-year-old Norman chapel and wonderfully atmospheric Great Hall.

You can also view various artefacts, including old weaponry, and guides offer fascinating insights into the building's history, past Prince-Bishops of Durham – a title that remained until the 19th century – and how it's run as a college today.

Palace Green, originally the city's market place, is located between the cathedral and the castle, where the central lawn area is surrounded by historic buildings. These include former almshouses now home to a café, and the Palace Green Library, which hosts Durham University's archives and special collections.

Until 2 October this year, the library has a 'Somme 1916; From Durham to the Western Front' exhibition. This commemorates the centenary of the bloody World War One battle through the stories and recorded reminiscences of people from County Durham who were there or who were connected through Home Front activities, such as military equipment manufacture and coal mining.

It's also worth visiting the Living in the Hills exhibit that uses archaeological finds and displays to help explore the past 10,000 years in Durham.

Clearly Durham University is an important part of the city's landscape and life. When you wander along the cobble-stoned narrow streets near the cathedral and castle you find buildings housing

different university departments and offices, and students and staff walking about between classes.

Further away from the cathedral and castle is another of the university's facilities that visitors can also explore. The 25-acre Botanic Garden has a wide collection of plants used for study, research and education. Visitors can take various trails to see different types of plants and trees from around the world, or wander through native woodland and meadows.

## Teesdale

Having enjoyed exploring the city, I headed out into the county of Durham.

I have visited Teesdale, the most southerly of the Durham Dales, before when a journey to certain Pennine Way locations brought me to the impressive High Force and Low Force waterfalls.

But this was my first visit to Barnard Castle. The market town, like Durham, has a castle on high rocks towering above a river, in this case the Tees. It's quite a surprise to see the impressive amount of outer wall that still exists, enclosing the ruins of the inner castle and the tower, which offers visitors some good viewing opportunities over the Tees gorge.

Guy de Balliol, who came to England with William the Conqueror and was given land in the area in about 1093, built a timber castle with earthwork fortifications on the commanding site. It was his nephew, Bernard, who created the stone castle in the 12th century and whose name was given to the community that developed around the structure.

At one time it actually belonged to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who became Richard III, and remained in royal hands until 1603, according to English Heritage, which maintains the site.

Don't miss The Bowes Museum, which is located in a grand French chateau-style building purposely built in the late 1800s for John and Josephine Bowes to house their fantastic collection of fine and decorative arts for local people to see. It opened in 1892, but sadly, neither John, successful businessman, MP and racehorse owner, or his wife, a French actress and amateur artist, lived to see it.











Some of Josephine's paintings are exhibited in what the museum describes as its "internationally significant" collections of fine and decorative arts. This includes paintings, furniture, silverware, ceramics, clocks and archaeological artifacts, and there's also a display about John and Josephine and how the museum was created.

Bowes Castle is situated in the village of Bowes. The castle was built in the 12th century on the site of a Roman fort that was used to guard the strategic Stainmore Pass. The remains of the castle's keep – constructed under Henry II's order in the 1170s – is all that still stands, but looking around the wonderful panoramic views over valleys, hills and moorland offered from this position, you can see why it had such defensive value.

A short distance from Bowes and Barnard Castle, and in a rural setting above the River Tees, are the ruins of Egglestone Abbey. It was founded between 1195 and 1198 by the de Moulton family for Premonstratensian canons and continued until the dissolution of the monasteries in 1548, when the site was granted to Robert Strelley, who converted part of it into a mansion.

### Steaming fun at Shildon

From religious history to industrial heritage. Driving into Shildon, you can see signs describing the town as 'the cradle of the railways'.

That might take you aback, unless you know that it's considered to be the world's first railway town and is the home of Locomotion, the National

**STUNNING:** An aerial image of Durham including the castle and the cathedral and the loop of the River Wear

Railway Museum. Shildon's railway-building tradition goes all the way back to the 1820s when Timothy Hackworth was appointed resident engineer, including responsibility for building locomotives, for George Stephenson's Stockton & Darlington Railway. He eventually became an independent railway engineer and New Shildon was the town that grew around his works. The large railway workshop that was developed specialised in manufacturing and servicing rolling stock, but finally closed in 1984.

Locomotion is keeping the town's railway traditions alive, including exhibits highlighting the local links.

Go inside the modern, hanger type building alongside railway tracks and you are met with an array of large, gleaming locomotives, ranging from a steam engine built in 1863, through to 'Winston Churchill' – one of 44 Battle of Britain class locos built by Southern Railways between 1945 and 1950 – to an Advanced Passenger Train, made in 1983. You can climb stairs to look inside the cabs of some of these locos, and also see an old colliery locomotive, a range of coaches, including one built for the Stockton and Darlington Railway.

### Beaming at the Beamish

Another award-winning heritage attraction in County Durham is the Beamish Museum. This well-executed, open-air living museum offers insights into how people lived and worked in the North East from different periods over nearly 200 years through buildings relocated from around the country or recreated on site.

The different areas offered across the 350-acre site are Pockerley Old Hall, which is focused on the 1820s, and a colliery and 1900s pit village complete with church, school, terrace cottage homes, a band hall and pit pony stables.

There's a 1900s town with cobbled main street and authentically furnished shops, a fairground, and a working period pub. Nearby, there's a railway station where you can take a look at the booking office and signal box and enjoy short rides in a steam locomotive-hauled coach.



**HERITAGE:** There are steam locomotives on display at Shildon



## Coastal attractions

For my last stop, I headed for the seaside at Seaham, which sits at the northern end of the Durham Heritage Coast.

There seems to be an Old and New Seaham. The newer, and now main part, developed into a coal mining community from the mid 19th century and has a port and marina.

On top of high cliffs a little north of the town at a car park overlooking this coast and with steps running down to the beach below, I found a noticeboard explaining that Old Seaham was founded by King Athelstan of England in the 10th century, but there had been settlements here dating back to the Bronze Age. The Romans used the site as a signal station 2,000 years ago.

Close to this 'look out' point, is the only building surviving from the Saxon village of Old Seaham. This is the St Mary the Virgin Church, which was founded around 700 and is said to be one of only 20 pre-Viking churches in the country. It had its chancel rebuilt in Norman times and a tower added around 1300.

I wondered if Lord Byron would have wandered past the church on one of his regular walks along the roads and beach close to Seaham Hall, which was once the home of the Milbanke family and is now a hotel and spa. Byron came to Seaham in 1814 to woo Ann Isabella Milbanke, whom he married at Seaham Hall in 1815.

The poet's links to the area include a local road named Lord Byron's Walk, and Seaham's Byron Place shopping centre.

A morning mist meant I couldn't see much of the cliff-lined coastline and beaches when walking along Seaham's seafront. But I did see and was moved by Ray Lonsdale's sculpture of 'Tommy', a First World War soldier. This imposing metal sculpture stands 9ft 5ins tall and weighs 1.2 tonnes.

The artist got his idea for this dramatic piece after hearing a story about a soldier from nearby Murton who won a war medal.

This area of Durham had a number of now closed collieries, and masses of coal waste from the pits was dumped onto beaches and into the sea over the years. But since this dumping stopped in the 1990s, the sea's cleansing action and work funded by the Turning the Tide project has been helping restore the natural environment.

Much of the Durham Heritage Coast is now home to various Special Sites of Scientific Interest and nature reserves with important flora and fauna species and geological features.

Just south of Seaham, I visited Nose's Point, now a double SSSI for its ecology and geology, and where Dawdon Colliery once operated and dumped pit waste. The beach has now been cleaned, thanks particularly to sea power.

Visitors can see maps and information boards explaining about how the area's habitats and natural life have been restored and also where coal industry operations happened. Blast Beach was named after a blast furnace built on Nose's Point in 1862, although I could see no trace of it now.

How times change. But it's all part of the multi-faceted history and heritage that can be found in County Durham. 🌊



**MOVING:** Roy Lonsdale's sculpture of 'Tommy', a First World War soldier

### Useful websites:

- **This is Durham** - [thisisdurham.com](http://thisisdurham.com)
- **Durham World Heritage Site** - [durhamworldheritagesite.com](http://durhamworldheritagesite.com)
- **Durham Cathedral** - [durhamcathedral.co.uk](http://durhamcathedral.co.uk)
- **The Bowes Museum** - [thebowesmuseum.org.uk](http://thebowesmuseum.org.uk)
- **Beamish Museum** - [beamish.org.uk](http://beamish.org.uk)
- **Explore Teesdale** - [exploreteesdale.uk](http://exploreteesdale.uk)
- **Durham Heritage Coast** - [durhamheritagecoast.org](http://durhamheritagecoast.org)





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# Natural treasures



**Words by: Steve and Ann Toon**

Steve and Ann spend their time exploring the natural world at home and abroad

They're the countryside jewels in our nation's crown – **Steve and Ann Toon** take a look at our national parks

**T**HREE CHEERS for our national parks. Hip, hip... hooray! It's National Parks Week this month so the jubilant tone might be excused. After all, we are talking about the crown jewels of Britain's countryside.

Some 15 gems – natural, national treasures if you will – spanning the country and showcasing and preserving the very best of our scenic splendour and rural cultural heritage. Something we can all be proud of and take pleasure in. And, indeed, some 90 per cent of us say that Britain's national parks are important to us.

These days national parks account for almost 10 per cent of the country and their boundaries embrace some of our best-loved landscapes, from spectacular lakes and moorland to our highest and most dramatic mountain ranges.

Stunning through every season, they contain important wildlife and habitats within an impressive 7,842 or so square miles.

Not far short of a quarter of the land in the English national parks is designated as an SSSI. England's national parks also contain around 41 per cent of English upland hay meadows, 80 per cent of upland chalk grassland and 27 per cent of the lowland fens.

Additionally, they play host to a staggering 4,000-plus ancient monuments, one World Heritage Site (Hadrian's Wall) and contain some

350 protected areas of special architectural interest. They're also called home by at least 331,000 folk.

Britain's national parks – essentially huge carbon stores – also play a role in protecting us against the effects of climate change. It's claimed that peat soils in our national parks store around 119 megatons of carbon, equivalent to England's total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for a whole year.

So there's lots to cheer this National Parks Week, from July 25 to 31, an annual event designed to raise awareness about Britain's diverse national parks and encourage more visitors.

Some 90 million visitors a year and counting can't be wrong, so check out our 'at a glance guide' to Britain's national parks on page 87 for inspiration for your next visit, or drop by the individual national park websites for details of events taking place during the week.

There's more reason to celebrate this year because, from 2016, there will be an extra 188 square miles of parks to enjoy, with the boundary extensions of both the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales national parks, each increasing by 3% and 24% respectively.

Tony Gates, chief executive of Northumberland National Park Authority (the park turned 60 this year and was recently voted National Park of the Year in a poll for the BBC), says: "National Parks



Week presents the perfect opportunity for people to get out and explore our incredible landscapes.

“We have a huge range of activities planned that showcase what’s special about the countryside, whether it’s walking in the footsteps of the Romans, taking in panoramic views or sampling the produce and crafts of the park’s many skilled artisans.”

“National parks are the soul of Britain,” says Rory Stewart, parliamentary under-secretary of state for the environment and rural affairs. “I’d like to make sure everyone in Britain and more visitors from around the world have the unique experience of going to them.”

Unlike the vast, wilderness national parks elsewhere, people live and work within the boundaries of Britain’s parks. A built environment, complete with rural and urban business enterprises, from tourism to traditional upland farming, rubs right up against the picture postcard backdrops. Agriculture is central to the parks’ everyday life.

“Being a farmer in a national park is a good thing. The park has always been helpful and encouraging in what we do here,” says north east farmer Nigel Moore. His family have farmed at Knoppingsholme, Tarsset, for three generations.

The farm lies in the North Tyne Valley in a remote and beautiful corner of Northumberland National Park. In recent years, Nigel and his wife, Rachael, have converted a number of their farm buildings into self-catering holiday cottages as a farm diversification project.

“There are sometimes downsides too,” he adds. “Like when we were converting the holiday accommodation. They were strict on what we could use for the roofing, and the particular colour we had to use to fit in with the local surroundings, which ended up making it more expensive.”

Recent pressures on national parks to encourage development and concerns about environmental issues such as fracking have cast shadows across the parks’ photogenic skylines. But not all future horizons are gloomy. National charity the Campaign for National Parks ([cnp.org.uk](http://cnp.org.uk)), which sets out to protect and promote national parks and monitor proposals that might undermine them, claims its recent ‘Stop the Cuts’ campaign helped to protect funding for the parks in real terms in the 2015 Spending Review.



Stephen Trotter, director of the Wildlife Trusts in England, hopes this will now help national parks step up their efforts to safeguard important wildlife. “Their income has just been protected from further cuts in the recent spending rounds. They now need to demonstrate that they care as much about wildlife as they do about the beauty of the view – and up the level of their performance,” he says.

There’s also a need to get more young people involved in our national park network. A recent survey showed only 10 per cent of children in the UK had access to outdoor learning and 12 per cent did not visit, or rarely visited, a natural place in the past year. In response, the government launched an eight-point plan to increase the involvement of young people in English national parks ‘at every stage of their education’.

Among the proposals are plans for the national parks to engage with more than 60,000 young people by 2017/18 through school visits, while the number of apprenticeships in national parks is expected to double by 2020.

The eight-point plan, which aims to bring about an increase in national park visitor numbers to 100 million annually, also contains potentially good news for farmers and food producers.

The government wants national parks to become known as great food destinations in the future and plans to celebrate national park produce, encourage food accreditation schemes such as the New Forest Marque ([newforestproduce.co.uk](http://newforestproduce.co.uk)) and work closely with parks to deliver more protected food names.

We’ll (eat) and drink to that...Hip... 🍷

**PARK LIFE:** Cuckmere Haven in the South Downs National Park

## Events for National Parks Week

### Yorkshire Dales National Park

#### Walk through Time - 30 July

Guided walks, part of the festival of archaeology, along the ‘corpse way’, via relics of the lead mining industry and to meet the ‘terrible knitters of Dent’.

### New Forest National Park

#### New Forest Show - 26, 27 and 28 July

Discover the New Forest’s wildlife, history and culture at New Park in Brockenhurst.

Find out about the £4.5 million ‘Past our Future’ scheme to make the forest fit for future challenges.

#### Date with Nature - daily during National Parks Week

Find out about the wilder side of New Forest life at the New Forest Reptile Centre.

### Pembrokeshire Coast National Park

#### Quiet Corners of the Preseli Hills - 26 and 29 July

Explore the remoter areas of this national park.

#### Roman Day - 29 July

A fun day learning about the Romans

### Northumberland National Park

Storyteller Jim - for dates and times, visit: [northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk](http://northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk)

A Northumberland native tells tales about the history and landscapes of the region’s beautiful and turbulent past.



## Our national parks - at a glance guide

### Loch Lomond and The Trossachs:

- Dramatic mountain scenery
  - Some 21 munros and 22 large lochs
  - Hillwalking and climbing
- [lochlomond-trossachs.org](http://lochlomond-trossachs.org)

### Lake District:

- England's highest mountain
  - More than 200 Wainwright fell walks
  - Some 16 lakes and smaller tarns
- [lakedistrict.gov.uk](http://lakedistrict.gov.uk)

### Yorkshire Dales:

- Yorkshire's famous three peaks
  - Landscapes with traditional barns and drystone walls
  - Limestone pavements at Mallam Cove
- [yorkshiredales.org.uk](http://yorkshiredales.org.uk)

### Peak District:

- Britain's oldest national park
  - High moorland and rocky outcrops
  - Some 34 miles of off-road trails
- [peakdistrict.gov.uk](http://peakdistrict.gov.uk)

### Snowdonia:

- Highest mountain in Wales
  - Historic castles
  - Some 23 miles of coastline
  - Steep gorges and waterfalls
- [eryri-npa.gov.uk](http://eryri-npa.gov.uk)

### Pembrokeshire Coast:

- Britain's only fully coastal national park
  - More than 400km of cliffs, coves and harbours
  - Long-distance walking trail
  - Historic castles, hill forts and prehistoric tombs
- [pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk](http://pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk)

### Brecon Beacons:

- Dramatic mountain and moorland scenery
  - Red Kites
  - International dark sky reserve
- [breconbeacons.org](http://breconbeacons.org)

### Exmoor:

- Moorland woodland, valleys



- Exmoor ponies
  - International dark sky reserve
- [exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](http://exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

### Cairngorms:

- Britain's highest mountain range
  - Winter sports
  - Cycling, climbing and hillwalking
  - Ancient pine forests
- [cairngorms.co.uk](http://cairngorms.co.uk)



### Northumberland:

- Most tranquil spot in England
  - Hills and moors and wildlife, including wild mountain goats
  - Internationally-recognised dark skies
  - Hadrian's Wall
- [northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk](http://northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk)

### North York Moors:

- Heather moorland
  - Scenic coastline with traditional fishing villages
  - Walking and cycling
- [northyorkmoors.org.uk](http://northyorkmoors.org.uk)

### The Broads:

- Britain's largest protected wetland
  - Traditional windmills
  - Sailing, fishing, boating
  - Flat for walking and cycling
- [broads-authority.gov.uk](http://broads-authority.gov.uk)

### South Downs:

- England's newest national park
  - South Downs Way 160km national trail
  - Chalk grassland and cliffs
  - Rolling hills and picturesque villages
- [southdowns.gov.uk](http://southdowns.gov.uk)

### New Forest:

- Historic royal hunting ground
  - Ponies in the open forest
  - Ancient trees - some more than 1,000 years old
- [newforestnpa.gov.uk](http://newforestnpa.gov.uk)

### Dartmoor:

- Moorland and granite tors
  - Internationally-important archaeology
  - Only national park to permit wild camping
  - Known for its myths and legends, including horsemen and spectral hounds
- [dartmoor.gov.uk](http://dartmoor.gov.uk)



### Your view

Which is your favourite national park and why? Email: [martin.stanhope@nfu.org.uk](mailto:martin.stanhope@nfu.org.uk)







# Not just a country pub

With rural pubs across the nation falling on hard times, the Three Daggers in Wiltshire is building a business with one or two tricks up its sleeve, writes **Clare Hunt**

**I**T'S WELL-ACCEPTED that, these days, running a pub in a rural community can be a minefield – stick to the old-fashioned boozer template and it's nigh on impossible to balance the books, go all snooty fine-dining and risk alienating the reliable and vital return trade that's right on your doorstep.

With this in mind, the Three Daggers in Wiltshire is attempting to strike a new balance: building an integrated business with a pub, B&B, farm shop and brewery that's a destination for everyone – be they locals or visitors.

Set in the village of Edington, in view of Salisbury Plain and a short hop from the Westbury White Horse, the site of the Three Daggers has been a public house since the 1750s. The current owner purchased it in the late 2000s when it was the village's last surviving pub and on the brink of residential redevelopment.

Following an extensive, no-expense-spared refurbishment, the Three Daggers reopened in 2010, with the addition of three very posh B&B rooms. In 2013, the business made its first expansion: opening the farm shop and micro-brewery, both housed in a beautifully crafted, oak-framed building. There's now also a vintage beer bus taking Three Daggers ales to events and festivals, plus a two-acre kitchen garden producing fruit, veg, flowers and honey for the shop and pub.

## Pub as hub

Central to the Three Daggers empire is the pub, offering a warm welcome whether you're out for drinks, an informal snack or the full-on gastro experience. With a rustic interior of oak, exposed beams and muted colours, the vibe is very much elegant country chic. Where many pubs have given over every inch to dining, the Three Daggers has retained a roomy bar, with space for mingling with a pint or lolling by the fire. The dining room is unpretentious and inviting, spilling over into an airy conservatory. There's even a private dining room upstairs if you fancy throwing a bash.

Considered touches are plentiful throughout: mirrors are actually TVs in disguise, ready to screen the biggest sports fixtures; ironwork is hand-crafted; doggy companions are rewarded with a jar of treats on the bar. The staff is super-friendly and informal but knowledgeable and briskly efficient.

General manager Robin Brown is at pains to make it clear that the Three Daggers takes its responsibility as a social hub for the village very seriously. Local groups use it as their meeting place, quizzes and live music are frequent features

and the beer garden overlooking the village's play area makes it the perfect destination for families.

"As the business develops," says Robin, "we're faced with a challenge to look after our loyal locals as well as passing customers. We never want to lose the feeling that the pub and the farm shop, in particular, are there to serve the locals. Without their valued support we could not achieve what we've set out to do, which is to keep the pub as the village social hub and see people enjoying themselves."

The pub's chef, Kevin Chandler, is a fairly new arrival, with experience hard-won in the kitchens of Marcus Wareing and Gordon Ramsay. His approach is pragmatic: he acknowledges that this is a village pub, not Mayfair fine dining, and manages his menu accordingly.

But pub food need not be predictable and Kevin makes the very best of really fine ingredients while offering interesting, palate-tempting twists. In the best meaning of the term, this is hearty food. Local produce isn't bought for the sake of localness; it's bought because it's the best, with the added benefit of being local.

Working with butcher Walter Rose in Devizes, beef comes from nearby Stokes Marsh Farm, lamb is from a flock that can be seen grazing at the back of the pub, venison comes from two miles away and game is sourced from local gamekeepers. Whole animals are bought and butchered, ensuring the menu offers interesting cuts, nothing goes to waste and only the used stock bones are thrown away.

With abundant super-seasonal veg coming from the kitchen garden, the chefs work hard to give their veggie offerings billing on a par with meat. And, if you can squeeze in a pudding, be prepared for a menu that delivers both imaginative and substantial creations. You'll need a lie-down afterwards.

## Home from home

Luckily, upstairs from the pub are three classy B&B rooms that wouldn't be out of place on the pages of a design mag. With their very English, understated glamour it's easy to see why they're popular with American visitors. Tranquil and airy, with vintage furniture and little luxurious touches, these aren't your average back-of-the-pub rooms. They feature iPod docks, TVs discreetly hidden inside antique wardrobes and bathrooms with rain showers.

The rooms share an elegant private lounge/kitchen, which offers an open fire, complimentary bread and juice and a well-stocked fridge to dip into. There are even hunter wellies to borrow



**Words by:**  
**Clare Hunt**

Clare is a writer and smallholder novice enjoying the good life in Devon

## ALL IN THE DETAIL:

Vintage furniture, luxury touches and home-made grub are pub hallmarks

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should you have come unprepared for a muddy walk, and there's even an honesty bar in case you fancy an after-hours tippie.

Across the yard, the purpose-built farm shop is bright and tempting. With soaring oak rafters and floor-to-ceiling windows, it's dominated by a deli counter packed with mouth-watering sweet-and-savoury treats made downstairs in the shop's on-site kitchen. Fruit and flowers from the market garden are available in season, as are home-produced eggs, apple juice, honey and chutneys. All the fancy produce (including hand-made gifts) you'd want from an upmarket farm shop is here, alongside more humdrum staples, making this a useful village store as well as a destination for special treats. A good portion of the shop is given over to Three Daggers ale, which you can take away in refillable 3.5-pint glass or steel 'growlers'.

### Brewers at work

An informal seating area in the shop offers the chance to enjoy your cake and coffee while scrutinising the work of the Three Daggers' resident brewers. The micro-brewery is state-of-the-art and very shiny indeed – this is no tin-pot home-brew effort.

Brewery experience days are available and private parties can be held amidst the oak and steel vats. Producing four ales from blonde to black, the brewery supplies the pub, farm shop and the Three Daggers vintage beer bus, as well as Tom Aitkens' restaurants in London and a growing number of outlets across the southwest.

The ales are easy drinking and flavoursome, with the brewers striving to balance the consistency of a commercial brew and the distinctiveness of an artisan product. While the focus may be on the core ales, the small-batch process makes experimentation with new brews possible.

With hops being cultivated in the kitchen garden, the Three Daggers brewers are keen to make fast-brewed 'green beer' and have their eye on taking the record for quickest hop-pick to brew. In keeping with the rest of the Three Daggers ethos, even the pump clips are stylishly hand-carved from oak by the business's brewing consultant. None of your plasticky tat here.

### Super-fresh and seasonal

As well as home-brewed ale, the Three Daggers shop and pub benefit from the freshest of fresh produce harvested from their own gardens, situated less than a mile away. With a fair lick of wind blowing in off Salisbury Plain, the two-acre market garden could offer tough growing conditions, but über-enthusiastic kitchen gardener Lucy Bates is full of plans for productivity. With 54 beds and two polytunnels, the garden produces everything from herbs to soft fruit and, of course, hops – an uncommon crop in Wiltshire.



**CHEERS: Head brewer**  
**Michael Andrews**

Heirloom vegetable varieties packed with flavour are favoured, with no need to worry about damage in transit: they're only going a mile up the road. Balancing specific requests from the chefs and the demands of the shop with sensible crop rotations can be tricky, Lucy admits, adding: "The aim is to eke as many productive months as possible from the land, to be as self-sufficient as possible and to make sure the very best use is made of any glut."

This can mean working with local producers such as Bradford-on-Avon's In a Pickle to make preserves and chutneys. The garden is in the process of conversion to organic status so finding ways of cheating pests without spraying is vital. The holistic philosophy of the business means that even rabbits, keen to help themselves to the lettuces, wind up in the pub's kitchen.

### Full of ideas

Field-to-fork may be a philosophy that's slightly wearied with over-use, but it does sum up what the Three Daggers is striving for. Consumers everywhere are genuinely more passionate about provenance than ever before and the Three Daggers shares that passion, without being annoyingly preachy about it.

If you want to know where something comes from, the staff will certainly be able and willing to tell you, and the answer is unlikely to be the local cash and carry. The over-arching aim of the business is to be a welcoming, accessible, enjoyable destination.

From live music and sports in the bar, to barbecues and pizzas on the deck, brewery days, private functions and family friendly events, all avenues are being pursued to exploit the many strings the Three Daggers has to its bow. 🍷

### Further information

[threedaggers.co.uk](http://threedaggers.co.uk)

Three Daggers, 47 Westbury Road, Edington,  
Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 4PG

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# Legges and Co

Think the butcher's art is dying out? **Martin Stanhope** talks to **Anthony Legges** who begs to differ

**T**HE CONVERSATION after a sumptuous Sunday roast with the Stanhope clan usually runs something like this: 'Fantastic beef. Legges?' 'Yes, Legges.'

In this corner of Herefordshire, and further afield too, the word has become synonymous with superb taste and quality, and chatting with Anthony Legges it's apparent why.

"It's our absolute dedication to seasonality and local suppliers that makes us special. We have 100 local suppliers, producing everything from beer and beef to honey and jam, and travel no more than 10 miles to source most of our products," he says.

"We've also got some major rural businesses such as Chase vodka and Tyrells crisps on our doorstep that Herefordshire can be proud of."

The Legges experience can be a little surprising at first. Located down a somewhat unpromising road leading out of the market town of Bromyard, and next-door to the local Co-op, your senses are assailed as you walk through the door. Pies, cold meats, fish, bread, cakes, beers, perrys, and cider all cry out for attention in a display that can only be described as bounteous. Customers jostle for attention, with a genuine bonhomie between counter and shop floor.

And this isn't just retail, but production too, with,

for example, 3,000 pies made on-site every week.

"Customers lead us in our range. We carry out regular tasting sessions, prioritising in-season local produce." And at Christmas and Easter, at times, you're lucky to get in through the door, as folks 'in the know' flock to Legges for essentials, treats, and last-minute foodie presents.

## A chip off the block

Anthony, 41, is Bromyard born and bred of farming stock, and wanted to give something back to his hometown when he finished his butcher's training. He branched out and established Legges, working hard to build a name and a niche for the place in a county where reputation is everything.

"No two days are the same – but it can be a little frenetic at times," he adds.

With a butchery, deli and pie shop, plus a tangible passion for customer service it's easy to understand why. A thriving online business, pig roast and vans whizzing out to deliver to farm shops and local petrol stations mean this sleepy corner of England is abuzz with foodie flair.

"I rarely do less than a 12 hour day, six days of week – and I really encourage input from both staff and customers."

**WINNING FORMULA:**  
Anthony Legges is passionate about local produce







## Branching out

Despite the dedication to localness, an online shop has helped Legges reach a national audience, with pies and produce being delivered around the UK – giving Britain a true taste of Herefordshire fayre. And for motorists heading up the M5 and stopping off at Gloucester Services, what better way to break up a tedious journey than a tasty Legges pie?

And Anthony is proud that, after years of being mocked for our lack of culinary skill and taste, Britain appears to have found its foodie bone.

“I put it down to the foot-and-mouth crisis in 2001,” he says. “It really got people thinking about their food and about ‘localness’.”

Although Legges HQ is a feast for the senses, quality and good value remains paramount. “People want to spend their money wisely, of course. However we’re not about cheap food, but good food – you can’t get a £3 chicken from us.”

But for the folks packing out Legges and returning week after week, he seems to have hit the right formula.

Such has been the success of ‘Legges of Bromyard’, Anthony is now opening ‘Legges of Hereford’ in the nearby county town. People of Hereford prepare, you’ve got a good thing coming. 🍷



**FANTASTIC FARE:** Fresh meat and fantastic pies are the trademark of Legges, but they also sell a whole range of other local foods

## A passion for pies

Legges are no slouches when it comes to branding, with their hot and cold pies becoming something of local legend. If a pie can have personality, they’ve certainly managed it with characterful pies such as ‘The Town Crier’ (a bold combination of Herefordshire free-range pork, venison and Legges tomato and chilli jam) and ‘The Farmer’ (a fill-you-up-til-supper combination of local chuck steak, Herefordshire cheddar, and Legges chutney in a hot-water short crust).

## Further information

**Legges of Bromyard, Tenbury Road, Bromyard, Herefordshire, HR7 4LW**

**Tel: 01885 482417. [leggesofbromyard.com](http://leggesofbromyard.com)**



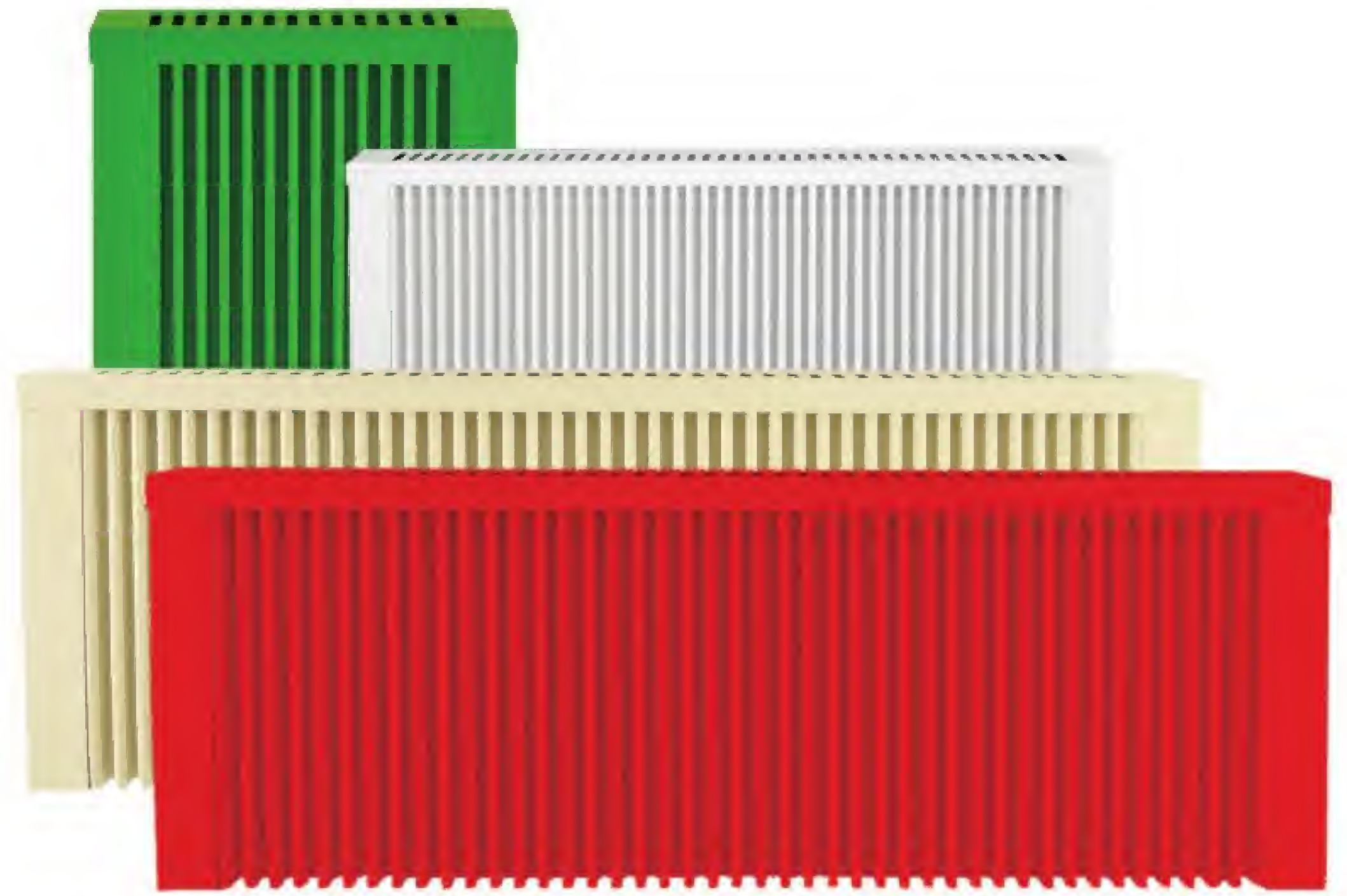
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# Eat it...

**Gemma Bower** takes a look at our great British dairy industry

**I**N BRITAIN, our farmers have a rich history of producing milk of the highest quality. It's also an industry that's built around high standards of animal welfare and hygiene.

As a nation, dairy has long played a huge part in our diets, providing the essential nutrients for good health. According to AHDB Dairy, dairy products are present in an impressive 98% of consumers' fridges in Britain, with almost half of the milk produced by our farmers being processed liquid milk, and the remaining amount being used for cheese, butter, yoghurts, powders and cream.

With 9,586 dairy farmers in England and Wales, the type of farm system used can vary from small scale, to extensive units where the cows are able to graze outdoors for part of the year or, to more intensive units where the herd is housed



for all or part of their lactation.

"There are different reasons for this," explains Sian Davies, NFU chief dairy adviser. "It could be due to geography, animal health issues, environmental issues or even cow comfort."

The UK is the 9th largest milk producer in the world and the 3rd largest producer in Europe; however, despite this, the UK dairy industry is faced with big challenges

with farmgate prices coming under pressure. There's huge competition from imported dairy products, especially for cheese and yoghurts, not to mention the ongoing retail battle to attract consumers with low shelf-edge milk price.

"Some people may say that the simple answer to the current market downturn is that farmers need to react to the market – but it's never that simple," explains Sian. "Dairy farming is a long-term business and so decisions on increasing and lowering production take time. Our dairy farmers and their milk buyers need to work together collaboratively to ride this storm – in the long-run the processors need a sustainable supply of milk to fill their factories and satisfy the domestic and export demand for dairy products."

Demand for dairy products is continuing to grow at home and abroad, and our farmers can, and do compete with the best in Europe. As consumers, we can help UK dairy farmers through this difficult period by buying British wherever we can, and asking our retailers what they are doing to support British dairy.

## Want to find out more?

- [nfuonline.com](http://nfuonline.com)
- [thisisdairyfarming.com](http://thisisdairyfarming.com)

## Meet the dairy farmer

Did you know that cows like to walk uphill? Abi Reader does and, as a dairy farmer, that's important to her.

The reason, she explains, is that it helps keep her herd of 180-cows happy, and while many of today's dairy farms have state-of-the-art technology that is able to monitor every cow, for farmers such as Abi it's the personal connection she has with her cows that matters.

Her farm's milking parlour can identify every cow, alert Abi to infections in her stock, feed them and monitor milk quantities. It even has a floor that inclines slightly to keep her cows

content. But when it comes to making decisions, Abi doesn't use technology – she uses instinct.

"All this technology makes life a lot easier, but it's a second opinion," explains the 34-year-old. "I use my knowledge of the herd and gut feeling to make decisions. No machine will ever beat a human when it comes to running a farm, and I'll always argue that."

"It's the little bits of information about a cow that makes all difference, such as her temperament, her history and her parentage. This means I can look at data and know what's really going on – not what the computer thinks is going on."

For Abi, her job isn't

just about producing milk, it's about being a 'carer of cows'. Her favourite part of the job is watching calves grow up and join the herd, then working with them as the new generation of cattle. As the herd develops, so the trust between Abi and the herd also evolves, meaning the cattle themselves will let Abi know when things aren't right.

An example of this can be when a cow treads on a stone and hurts its foot.

"It's important to treat the injury quickly, but technology won't necessarily pick it up because cows are very good at hiding injuries," she says. "However, I have had cows come up and bump me to let me know something's wrong, which, on investigation, turned out to be a problem with their feet."

For Abi, a normal day starts at 4.15am, with the first day's milking at 5am. After that she checks on the cows and puts clean bedding out, cleans the yard and milking parlour, then carries out a range of jobs. This can include meeting the vet, filling in milk records, making telephone calls and checking on the farm's fencing.

While there is also paperwork to do, various apps on her phone allow her to do much of the work on the go, before the

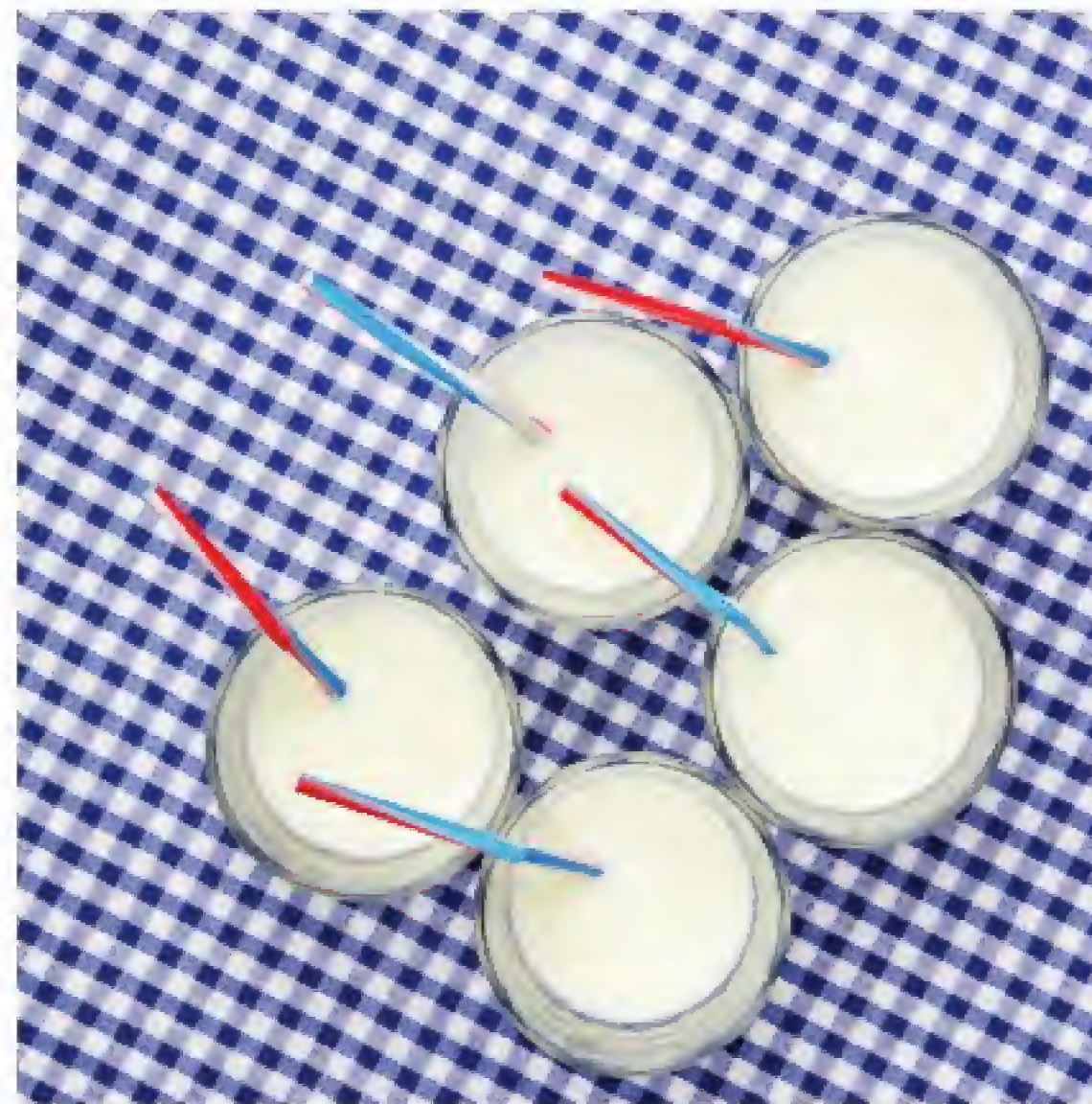




## Nutritional nuggets

- A glass of milk is a source of protein, calcium, potassium, phosphorus, iodine, vitamin B2, B5 and B12.
- To achieve the same amount of calcium as from a 200ml glass of milk, we would have to consume:
  - 4 servings of broccoli
  - 11 servings of spinach
  - 63 Brussels sprouts
- Milk is increasingly becoming an aid for muscle recovery in athletes and sportsmen and for hydrating the body with fluids after physical exercise.

Source: The Dairy Council



cows are milked again at 3.30pm. While the second milking is usually carried out by the farm's relief milkers, Abi is always on hand to watch and monitor the cattle. After this, she checks the cattle again, particularly the cows that have just calved, before finishing around 7pm.

The Glamorganshire farm - which Abi runs with her parents and uncle - produces 1.2 million litres of milk a year from its Holstein Friesians and Dairy Shorthorns, which is then sold to a major retailer.

There has, of course, been much media coverage about the struggles of dairy farmers, and it's something Abi's all too aware of. But she is positive about the industry's future. "The nutritional value of milk is now being recognised, and I can see demand picking up considerably in the coming years," says Abi.

"But if dairy farming is allowed to vanish in the UK, then the rest of the world will benefit from this demand and the UK will lose out. This would be dire for rural economies, as dairy farming is a major employer, and gives a lot back to communities."

# Drink it...

Fabulous beer and food venues in rural areas may sound like a dream, but our resident ale 'sandwoman' **Melissa Cole** can make them come true



## Hawkshead Beer Hall, Kendal, Cumbria

A beer hall, with an amazing menu, in the middle of the Lake District... is there much more I need to say?

Oh, ok then. Hawkshead makes not only sublime beers but the venue is very impressive too, with public access to most of the brewery and a menu of 'beer tapas' created by consultant chef, Steven Doherty, the first British head chef of a Michelin 3-star restaurant - Le Gavroche. Well worth a visit any time of year, but if you're around there from 21-23 July when the Northern Craft Beer Festival is on, do pop in for a pint or three.



## The Bunch of Grapes, Pontypridd, Wales

This is one of my favourite pubs in the world. Tucked away down a tiny side road in Pontypridd, it's a delight for both locals and visitors alike.

With a whole host of awards, including being voted the Good Pub Guide's best dining pub last year, it's owned by Otley Brewing Company's Nick Otley and serves up the fantastic brews he makes, alongside a further selection of craft beers.

My favourite dish is the cockles with bacon and laverbread - an ozoney, smoky, umami delight of a dish that I have to have every time I go.



## The Ship Inn, Mousehole, Cornwall

Home to the Stargazy Pie, the Ship Inn is one of the most idyllic pubs I've ever seen, perched on the wall of the town's harbour.

Stargazy pie was allegedly born from a famine situation in the 16th century, when storms kept the fishermen in port and the town's food supplies were at an end. Step forward brave Tom Bowcock, who set out to sea and came back with a bountiful catch, all of which was baked into an enormous pie with the sardine's head poking out of it, gazing at the stars.

Perfect washed down with a pint of St Austell, which is handy because the brewery owns the pub, Tom's bumper catch is celebrated every December 23 with bawdy songs and fish pie galore.



# Cook it...

Cheese is one of the most versatile ingredients that can add great flavours to any dish. Here are some tasty recipes courtesy of the British Cheese Board. For more cheesy recipes, visit: [britishcheese.com](http://britishcheese.com)

## West Country Farmhouse Cheddar Frittata

**Serves:** 4

**Preparation time:** 10 minutes

**Cooking time:** 20 minutes

### Ingredients

100g (4oz) pasta shapes, such as macaroni, penne or farfalle

15g (1/2oz) British butter

1 bunch spring onions, chopped

100g (4oz) roasted red peppers (from a jar),

drained and chopped

6 medium eggs

4 tbsp milk

1 tbsp chopped fresh herbs (thyme, parsley or chives)

100g (4oz) West Country Farmhouse Cheddar, grated

Ground black pepper

### Method

- Cook the pasta in boiling water for 8-10 minutes, until just tender. Rinse with cold water and drain thoroughly.
- Melt the butter in a large non-stick frying pan and gently fry the spring onions for 3-4 minutes, then add the pasta and peppers, stirring them through.
- Preheat the grill. Beat the eggs, milk and herbs together, season, then pour into the frying pan. Sprinkle the cheese over the top. Cook on the hob over a low heat until set, then brown and set the surface under the grill. Cool for a few minutes, then slice into wedges. Serve hot, warm or cold, with salad.



#### Tip

Use cooked sliced new potatoes instead of pasta - you'll need about 300g (10oz)



## West Country Cheese Straws

**Makes:** 24 cheese straws

**Preparation Time:** 20 minutes, plus chilling time

**Cooking Time:** 15 minutes

### Ingredients

225g/8oz plain flour

Pinch of salt

25g/1oz walnuts (bashed in a bag with a rolling pin to grind)

25g/1oz sunflower seeds.

75g/3oz British butter, chilled

75g/3oz extra mature West Country Farmhouse Cheddar, grated

2 medium egg yolks

2 tbsp cold water

### Method

- Sieve the flour and salt into a medium-sized bowl and stir in sunflower seeds and roughly ground walnuts.
- Coarsely grate the butter into the flour along with the cheese. Add egg yolks and water and combine together using a fork and then by hand.
- Transfer mix onto a work surface lightly dusted with flour and knead until smooth.
- Roll out in an approximate rectangle to the thickness of a £1 coin.
- Cut into even pencil length strips and carefully transfer to a baking sheet lined with baking parchment using a palette knife or spatula.
- Bake at 200°C/400°F/Gas Mark 6 until golden brown in colour and crisp. Cool on baking sheet for 2-3 minutes to harden before transferring to a cooling tray.
- Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.



## Double Gloucester and Farmhouse Cheddar Muffins

Makes: 10

### Ingredients

50g (2oz) Farmhouse Cheddar cheese, grated  
 50g (2oz) Double Gloucester cheese, grated  
 250g (9oz) plain flour  
 1 level tablespoon baking powder  
 1/2 teaspoon salt  
 1 level tablespoon caster sugar  
 1 level tablespoon chopped fresh chives (optional)  
 1 medium egg  
 240ml (8fl oz) British milk  
 90ml (3fl oz) vegetable oil

### Method

- Preheat the oven to 190C, 375F, Gas Mark 5.
- Put 10 paper muffin cases into a muffin tin.
- Mix together the two cheeses on a plate. Sift the flour, baking powder, salt and sugar into a large mixing bowl. Stir in about three-quarters of the cheese and all the chives (if using).
- Beat together the egg, milk and vegetable oil in a separate bowl. Add to the dry ingredients, stirring until just combined. It's very important not to overmix the ingredients - the batter will be quite lumpy but there should be no dry flour visible.
- Spoon the mixture into the muffin cases, then sprinkle the reserved cheese on top. Transfer to the oven and bake for 20-25 minutes until light golden brown. Cool for a few minutes, then serve whilst warm.





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# Havens on earth

**Clare Hunt** finds out if there is still a future for our rural churchyards



**Words by:  
Clare Hunt**

Clare is a writer and smallholder novice enjoying the good life in Devon

**W**E ALL SHARE an idealised notion of a country churchyard: weathered-oak lychgates, venerable yews shading lichen-etched sculptures, tombstones with near indecipherable epitaphs, flower-dotted meadow grasses rustling with wildlife and humming with insects. Often the oldest enclosed pieces of land in a parish, churchyards have, for many centuries, been places of tranquility and contemplation – peaceful sanctuaries amidst the hurly-burly of life. But while romantic decay may be part of their charm, it's just one of many threats faced by our churchyards as they struggle to find their place in the 21st century.

## Churchyards in modern life

At the heart of our historic environment, churchyards are places for personal remembrance as well as collective cultural identity. They cocoon complex and fascinating capsules of architecture, historical record and ecology, and, with more than 20,000 of them across the UK, burial sites represent a significant land holding with unique and fragile threads connecting us to the past.

Although burial is declining in popularity, churchyards remain primarily places of final rest. Memorials to loved ones remind us of those who have gone before,

but also offer a unique timeline of changing styles and tastes in architecture, stone carving and verse.

They give us insight into the economic, political and religious dynamic of a parish, as well as the shifting attitudes towards life and death. Some epitaphs are intensely devout, others whimsical or humorous, all are deeply personal and revealing.

There are few other places where the thread of social history is so palpable. The 'Who Do You Think You Are' effect has boosted the profile of churchyards as places crucial for historical research, especially amongst those on a genealogical quest. Archives may be informative, but churchyards bring immediacy and connection to a family's past.

Alongside their historical importance, churchyards are ecologically vital, too. The unintended but happy side-effect of churchyard management techniques remaining relatively unchanged over centuries is the establishment of places of unique biodiversity.

Thriving havens of grasses, fungi, lichens, mammals and invertebrates have bloomed undisturbed in protected churchyards, and three quarters of the UK's ancient yews are found there.

## CHERISHED:

We might not pay them much attention, but churchyards are the backdrop to many of our most seminal moments







**A PLACE TO PAUSE:** Our lives and loves are writ in stone across the nation's churchyards

Martin Palmer, secretary general of the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC), observes: “Churchyards are important because they have been left pretty much intact and unaffected for sometimes more than a thousand years. This means indigenous species have been able to survive; no chemical fertilisers have altered the composition of the soil; trees and bushes have been able to grow without being cut and thus a tiny fragment of pre-human habitation landscape survives.

“The bodies of the dead provide good fertiliser and where you have a church which once had a shrine, you’ll find seeds spat out by pilgrims, or from where they found toilets in the area, which will lead to plants which otherwise would not have survived. Essentially, this is a piece of nature

unaffected by the worst changes we have wrought upon our natural landscape and a space accessible to all.”

### Threatened sanctuaries

But sadly, while churchyards retain purpose and function in modern communities, the threats to their existence are many. With little direct economic value, churchyards are often neglected and underfunded.

Housing and roads encroach upon previously protected land, and village life is no longer as cohesive and introspective as it once was.

With congregations diminishing and second-home ownership rising, deep-rooted emotional ties to the local church have waned. In years past, the churchyard would have been tended with continuity and from a sense of love and duty, but this is becoming less common and professional maintenance is costly for dwindling congregations. For ease of mowing, many churchyards have seen ancient tombstones rearranged into ordered lines – disastrously altering history and ecology.

Conflict is common between those who want to retain tall grasses, self-seeding flowers, wild areas and ponds, and those who want churchyards to be neat and tidy burial places.

“If gravestones are moved so the lawn mower can run more easily, you destroy important places for small animals, insects and reptiles (and the food for their predators, such as barn owls and buzzards) and the variegated nature of the traditional churchyard is changed into a manicured front lawn with all the ecological loss that entails,” says Martin.

The issue of responsibility is crucial – who takes care of churchyards and what are their obligations? It’s a complicated question influenced by the closure and deconsecration of churches, the selling







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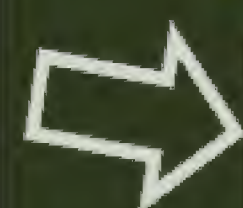


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of church buildings for new purposes, and the closure of cemeteries for burials. It may not always be clear if responsibility lies with local parochial church councils or local authorities, but, whichever it is, money is thin on the ground for effective conservation and restoration.

Ashley Wood, from Cornwall Mining Villages Historic Churchyards, acknowledges this challenge: "Today, both local churches and local authorities have worryingly fragile finances... so non-income-producing assets in the community have little hope of finding support."

A shortage of expertise is also a problem which can result in neglect or inappropriate management. Both built and natural heritage will deteriorate without protection and while bodies such as Historic England acknowledge an innate decay of outdoor and underground material is inevitable, they also champion vital conservation and challenge the culture of accepting decline and loss.

While natural threats such as the numerous instances of widespread flooding in recent years, and the effects of climate change (especially damaging for ancient yews) cannot be underestimated, many of the threats faced by traditional churchyards are manmade. Vandalism wreaks untold damage, monuments and stone carvings are stolen for architectural salvage and thefts of lead from church buildings can result in vehicle damage to the surrounding churchyard. And, as decay sets in, monuments become unsafe and health and safety issues loom large.

## Championing the cause

Sue Cooper, manager at Caring for God's Acre (a charity championing the conservation of churchyards), observes: "Churchyards are now seen as places full of nature and history, which can be used for learning and community activity, such as practical conservation work days, bringing benefit to the volunteers and the local environment. Churchyards have become places where communities can demonstrate to others their care for the environment and celebrate life."

But a sizeable struggle for the charity is in building public awareness of the value of churchyards to our natural, built and social heritage. The varied profile of those fighting to preserve churchyards very much reflects the changing use of these unique spaces.

The governing bodies of the churches themselves acknowledge that, as well as being final resting places, they're also rich in historical, ecological, aesthetic and artistic interest. Caring for God's Acre (CfGA) leads the way in promoting the conservation effort and works in collaboration with other organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts, churches of all faiths and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

Living Churchyard schemes, often working with local schools, are transforming many sites into areas for community education in history and ecology. Throughout the country, local groups strive to preserve their churchyard heritage – the

## Notable churchyards to visit

### St Giles Church, Stanton St Quintin, Wiltshire

Tapping into the craze for geocaching (a kind of modern day, GPS-assisted treasure hunt), St Giles Church volunteers located a nano-geocache in an empty snail's shell. This innovative idea has attracted numerous geocachers who wouldn't otherwise have visited the church.

### St Mary's Church, Astbury, Cheshire

Steeped in Wesleyan and Cromwellian history, the churchyard at St Mary's boasts an ornate canopied tomb and a 2,000-year-old yew tree.

### St Mary the Virgin, Painswick, Gloucestershire

Legend suggests there are 99 yew trees in this two-acre churchyard, and if a 100th tree grew it would be destroyed by the devil. In the year 2000, to mark the new millennium, a 100th tree was planted. As yet, the devil has not destroyed it. St Mary the Virgin also boasts numerous remarkable 17th- and 18th-century stone memorials.



### The Church of Our Lady, Warnford, Hampshire

Rich in history dating back to the 7th century, Warnford is best known for its breathtaking springtime display of snowdrops.

### St Mary's Church, Eastling, Kent

Dating back to Norman times and featuring a 2,000-year-old yew tree, the focus in this churchyard is very much on encouraging wild flowers, grasses and wildlife to flourish.

### St George's Church, Crowhurst, Surrey

The massive hollow yew in St George's churchyard is reputed to be 4,000 years old and was named one of the 50 Great British Trees in honour of the Queen's Jubilee.

organisation Cornwall Mining Village Churchyards represents a group of parish councils and seeks to revitalise closed churchyards that they see have potential as community assets.

Meanwhile, the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) is a secular body working with major religions to help them develop their own environmental programmes. And, of course, bodies such as Historic England are instrumental in maintaining the legacy of churchyards for years to come.

Despite the challenges they're facing, there is a future for our country churchyards. They'll continue to provide havens of peace and tranquillity, to be spaces for contemplation and remembrance. Though fewer, burials will still take place. Genealogists and historians will continue to peer into the past. Wildlife will thrive, rare species will flourish and ancient yews will prevail. Preservation of buildings and memorials will complement ecological conservation.

But this will only happen if we all realise these centuries-old mirrors of social history and unique ecological capsules won't just take care of themselves. They need our help. ♻️

## EVERY CHURCHYARD

**HAS A STORY:** What features of your local churchyard have you always found fascinating? And do you help to conserve your local one?

Email: [martin.stanhope@nfu.org.uk](mailto:martin.stanhope@nfu.org.uk) with your thoughts

## Further information

[caringforgodsacre.org.uk](http://caringforgodsacre.org.uk)  
[arcworld.org](http://arcworld.org)  
[cornwallminingvillagechurchyards.net](http://cornwallminingvillagechurchyards.net)



# Purple reign

**Nicola Stocken** extols the many virtues of lavender

**F**EW PLANTS FILL the senses as intensely as lavender. With silvery foliage and elegantly poised flowers in a variety of colours, lavender is as pleasing to the eye as to the nose.

Despite their size, the petite flowers have a strong, sweet, aromatic fragrance that evokes feelings of calm and contentment – somewhat surprisingly, this is distinctly different from lavender's culinary flavours, which are stimulating and softly spicy.

The touch of the stems on bare skin is similarly soft, best experienced by brushing through a lavender-lined path, causing the long flower stems to ebb and flow in waves of scent and buzzing bees.

Prized since ancient times, lavender is not only legendary for its sensual qualities, but also as a wonderfully versatile shrub. Suiting any sunny, well-drained spot in the garden, lavender is equally at home in a formal scheme as tightly clipped hedges, or billowing waywardly in a cottage garden setting where it draws nectar-seeking bees and butterflies.

Lavenders are sun-loving and drought-tolerant, ideal for forming dense mounds in gravel gardens. As a massed planting, lavenders create greatest impact either as a filler in parterres, or in flowing waves of differently coloured varieties. Individual specimens thrive in deep pots filled with compost containing plenty of grit. And, with many medicinal and culinary uses, lavender is a 'must' in both cutting and herb gardens.

There are some 25 species of lavender, although there's some confusion caused by the presence of many hybrids and cultivars. The flowers come in a wide range of colours, passing from white through various shades of blue, indigo, mauve, violet, pink and purple.

Lavender is evergreen, so even when the ornamental flower spikes have long since faded, its handsome, aromatic foliage forms pleasing mounds to add structure in winter months. Originating from warmer climes, it does not survive cold and waterlogging, while only varieties such as English lavenders tolerate sub-zero conditions.

The majority of lavenders grown in the garden are either varieties of English lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*), hybrids that include Lavandins (*Lavandula x intermedia*), or French lavenders (*Lavandula stoechas*), which stand apart by virtue of the



**Words by:**  
**Nicola Stocken**  
Nicola travels all over the UK photographing and writing about outstanding gardens

distinctive purple bracts that sit atop each flowerhead. French lavenders dislike the cold, need regular dead-heading to keep flowering, and their pleasing scent is more akin to rosemary than the traditional English lavender fragrance.

For formal hedging, most *angustifolias* and *x intermedias* can be easily clipped into shape. If the soil is on the heavy side, it's essential to create ridges to plant in, so as to raise the base of the plants above wet soil.

Space smaller cultivars about 30cm apart, leaving gaps of around 45cm between larger ones. At first, the plants seem oceans apart, but they soon flow together. It's essential to prune right from the start, after flowering, using secateurs to remove the flower stalks and up to 3cm of each year's growth, providing that some green growth remains afterwards.

Lavender makes a lovely parterre infill, contained by clean-lined box hedges that contrast against the unruly eruption of lavender heads. Come winter, and the emphasis shifts towards formality with clipped domes of lavender – glistening with dew or frost – enclosed by straight-sided hedges.

However, the effect is spoilt if individual bushes die, leaving bare gaps in the pattern, so from the outset, buy 10% more bushes than needed. Plant these 'spares' separately so that, in the event of losses, they can be moved to fill gaps.

It's also worth growing some spare bushes when planning massed plantings of lavenders. Waves of long-lasting colour and texture are created by planting groups of different varieties, so that the flowers contrast – pink against purple, blue versus white, or indigo alternating with rose, for example.

To enjoy lavender flowers all summer long, plant species with different flowering times – *angustifolias* for June, followed by *x intermedias* for July and August.

French lavenders, *Lavandula stoechas*, flower all summer long if dead-headed: they're the showy ones, sometimes bi-coloured, with colourful little 'ears' that prick up on the flowerheads.

Lavenders combine particularly well with roses, especially older bushes where the lavender conceals the roses' gnarled stems, maturing into eventual replacements if needed. Plant bulbs of *Allium cristophii*, A. 'Purple Sensation' or the drumstick varieties between the bushes, which not only provide a foil to the colours, but also support the flowerheads.



## HOLISTIC THERAPY:

Dried lavender can be used in pillows to encourage sleep or in soothing oils







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# Seven English lavenders to grace your garden

English lavenders, the *angustifolia* varieties, are the hardiest of all lavenders. Planted in full sun and soil that never waterlogs, correctly fed and pruned, an English lavender bush gives pleasure for up to a decade.

There are more than 250 different varieties to choose from, coming in a range of sizes and flower colours. Here are seven contrasting varieties for you to try:



*Lavandula angustifolia* 'Hidcote', a popular compact form with bushy, grey-green foliage and dense, deep violet flowers on 23cm long stems. Ideal for hedging.



*Lavandula angustifolia* 'Nana Alba', a dwarf English lavender with profuse white flowers above light green foliage. Spreads no more than 30cm in every direction.



*Lavandula angustifolia* 'Blue Ice' bears spikes of blue-white flowers that contrast with bright green leaves. A true blue variety that stands out in borders.



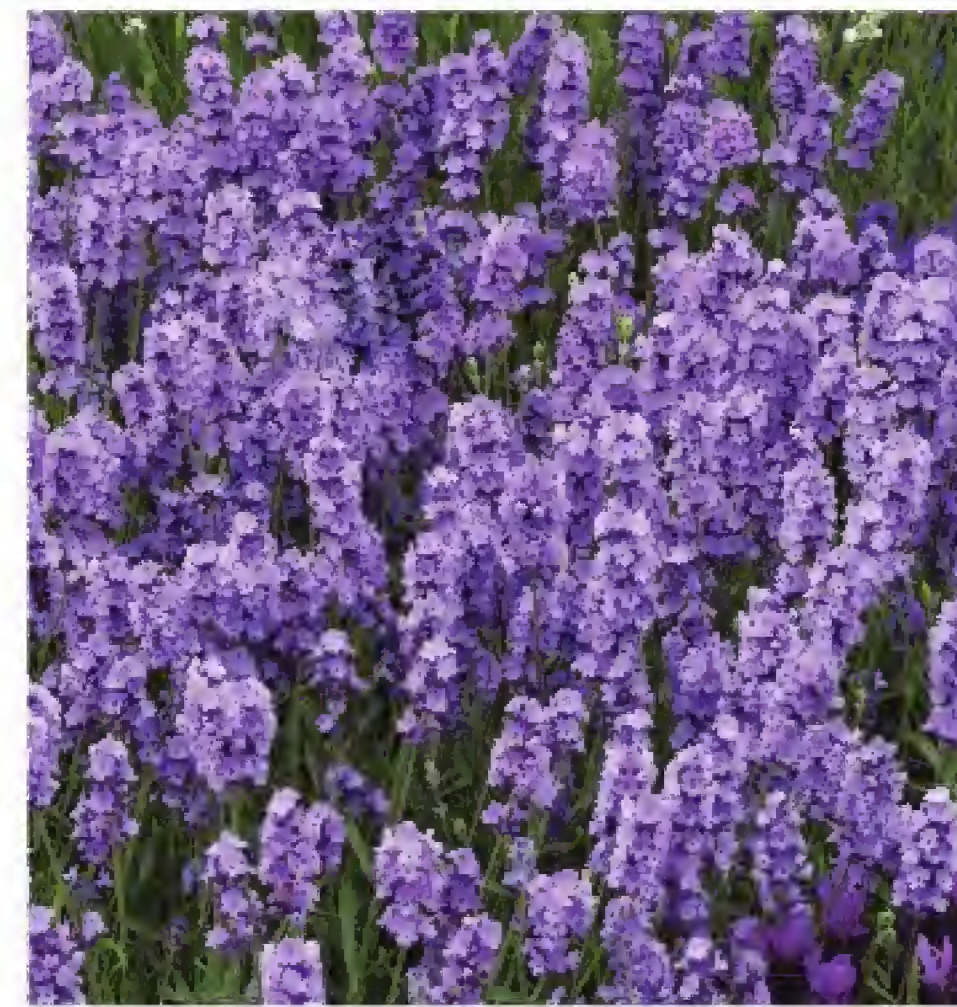
*Lavandula angustifolia* 'Miss Katharine', with an upright habit and spreading green foliage, in early summer this variety bears bold pink to pale purple flowers.



*Lavandula angustifolia* 'Beechwood Blue' is challenging to propagate, producing small, compact bushes with intense deep blue flowers that draw the eye and bees alike.



*Lavandula angustifolia* 'Lady Ann' flowers profusely with masses of mildly scented, pale pink flowers that contrast well with grey-green foliage.



*Lavandula angustifolia* 'Melissa Lilac' is an unusual variety with large, lilac-coloured flowers on long spikes above slender, aromatic, silver-grey leaves.

Don't forget that whereas box lasts for decades, lavender is typically short-lived, and may need replacing after around eight years – sooner if allowed to become woody and out of control. However, lavender is easy to propagate from cuttings taken in autumn from non-flowering shoots. Simply pull sideshoots away from the main stem so that a 'heel' of bark is attached. Root the cuttings in a mixture of sand and peat, and overwinter in a cold frame, ready to plant out next spring.

Once established, lavender copes with drought, making it a welcome addition to the gravel garden, where it thrives amongst other Mediterranean plants such as cistus, phlomis and euphorbias.

Lavender belongs to the same plant family as basil, rosemary, sage, thyme and mint, so it's no wonder it looks so at home in herb gardens. Planted in the kitchen garden as a companion plant to ward off pests, lavender's distinctive aroma can confuse aphids, keeping them off crops such as carrots, cabbages and leeks. It's apparently also an effective way of repelling both mice and rabbits. Planted around fruit trees, its scent not only deters the devastating codling moth, but also repels whitefly. In addition, it attracts the pollinating insects so essential to fruiting.

As a medicinal herb, lavender has long been prescribed to relax both mind and body, as an antiseptic, an infusion to treat chest complaints and for headaches. The Romans used lavender in their baths – hence a possible derivation of its name from the Latin word *lavando*, meaning washing.

Today, lavender is widely used in cosmetics, oils and remedies for soothing the spirit. A simple remedy to make is a lavender pillow to help promote undisturbed sleep – pick stems just as the flowers open, and hang upside down until dry. Place dried flowers only in a small muslin bag before placing inside a pillowcase. Sweet dreams! 🌸

## Growing tips for lavender

- Ideally, plant between April and May, just as the soil is warming up
- Lavender thrives on poor to fertile soils that are not too rich, especially chalky or alkaline
- Grow only in well-drained soil
- If planting in clay, lavender may be short-lived, so give it the best chance by adding gravel and organic matter, creating a mound to plant in
- In very heavy soils, grow in raised beds
- Plant in full sun, sheltered from chilly winter winds
- Trim after flowering, no later than early autumn, to prevent the bushes becoming woody and leggy
- If growth develops during warmer winters and early springs, clip in spring well before buds form
- Once an established plant is neglected, and becomes unkempt and woody, it's probably beyond help, and best replaced.





# Therapy for the mind

**Lorna Maybery** finds out more about a new charity that's using gardening to help people with mental health issues

**I**F YOU'VE HAD A BUSY, stressful week, spending time in the garden can prove cathartic, enabling you to relax, switch off and enjoy physical work in the fresh air.

In Buckinghamshire, this idea of gardening as therapy for the mind has been taken a few steps further thanks to the innovative thinking of two women and the support of a national garden centre chain.

Lindengate is a charity that offers specialised garden activities to help those with mental health needs and was the idea of Charlie Powell and Sian Chattle, friends who both had experiences dealing with mental health issues and realised there was very little locally to help people in their recovery.

Charlie, who is the charity's site and horticultural manager, explains: "It started on the bottom step of a party with a glass of wine in hand! We were talking about our dreams; I have a background of depression and while the individual aspects of

what I was being offered through the NHS were quite good, they were all restricted on time and really didn't lend themselves to giving me any clear support.

"I had an opportunity to get into professional gardening and did my RHS training and was working on gardens five or six days a week and, as a result of that, felt great and I wasn't on any medication.

"So I thought why is someone not doing this to help other people? There should be something out there."

"I've been a primary teacher for 30 years and done a lot of working with children outside," says Sian, who is the charity's service user manager. "We planted wildflower meadows, dug ponds and grew veg and, even at that young age, I could see that children that had academic problems were loving it. I also have two children on the autistic spectrum myself and I knew that once they got to



**Words by:**  
**Lorna Maybery**  
Lorna is Countryside's deputy editor who loves being in the great outdoors





the adult system there was nothing out there for them. My son loves nature and being outside and gardening.”

After a lot of discussions and research, the pair decided to set up a charity that would help people with mental health issues through gardening.

From a practical point of view they needed to find a suitable site that wouldn't cost the earth, and this is where Wyevalle's World's End Garden Centre in Wendover, near Aylesbury, stepped in.

“There was a rundown area next to the garden centre that used to be allotments,” says Charlie. “Sian and I realised this was perfect. We asked the garden centre if they would let us use two or three of the old allotments for free for two or three months and they came back in 24 hours and said ‘do you want to take over the whole site?’”

“We said yes with some trepidation. We'd never envisaged taking over such a large site – it's five acres – but given the opportunity we weren't going to say no. Very quickly some incredible people gathered around us and we just got going with it and within 18 months we were up and running.

“It's a fantastic place but the site has a lot of challenges. But because it's so big it allows us the diversity of activity that we need, given that we help people with a broad spectrum of needs.

“Everything we do is based on two things, one is



**DRIVING FORCE:** From left, Charlie Powell and Sian Chattle



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being fit for purpose and appropriate for the needs of the people that come here, and the second is to spend as little money as possible.”

For instance, the charity has established a tyre garden. It was done without spending much money, as most of the materials were donated, and it enabled different groups of gardeners to undertake different projects.

“It allows them to see something from beginning to end and really gives them as much opportunity to make their own decisions about what’s going to work,” says Charlie.

Around 110 volunteers help out at the charity today, alongside Charlie, Sian and therapeutic health specialist Chloe. And recently, the charity has appointed a director, Mike Harris, who was, himself, a Lindengate volunteer.

“My role as director is to help the organisation grow,” he explains. “Lindengate works from two fronts. One, there’s the natural process; you walk through the gates, you see a garden; it’s a big garden on a five-acre site and there’s lots of different things to do.

“The biophilia effect, which is where we are genetically programmed to green spaces, makes people feel more at ease with themselves and the world around them.

“The second part is the professionalism with which Sian and Charlie have set up Lindengate, which the whole team buys into. This includes the way we address the people who need our services – we call them our gardeners – the way we manage their records and help manage each and every visit they make to us so there’s an objective behind any session here.

“We particularly help people at the margins of society. For example, we have a lady who is often in trouble with the police who has found a different way of managing her life because she suddenly

has a perspective of time outside of the rough and tumble of her life.”

Sian adds: “When people come through the gate it doesn’t matter about their diagnosis or lack of diagnosis, we deal with the wellbeing of the individual; we get to know them as a person and how we can support them and make no judgments. That’s what’s behind the ethos of Lindengate.”

The charity is continually trying to raise funds and raise the profile of the organisation to encourage more people to make use of their extensive services and experience. They help people from all walks of life and all ages and have produced an amazing garden from scratch.

Sian says: “We insist on remaining an independent charity, which has its own pitfalls, including funding. We have to remain independent, which means we have to charge our gardeners money to come here, which they can claim through their benefits if they can’t afford it themselves.

“We are aware there’s a huge band of people who can’t afford it, or aren’t on the right benefits, so we fundraise for bursaries. We want to help everyone, but we have to be sustainable, as there’s no good us folding in six months, that’s not going to help anyone. We have to be realistic about funding.”

And it’s not just gardening that Lindengate is involved in. To take them through the winter months the charity has put in a large polytunnel that’s used for arts and crafts when the weather is too inclement for gardening.

“The gardening season has its limits, so over the winter we have added art and crafts and cooking. It’s seen us through the winter months when it’s not appropriate for people to be outside,” says Sian.

“We’re creating an environment that has so many different opportunities for our gardeners,” says Charlie. “There’s something here for everyone.” 🌱

#### LOOKING GOOD:

The tyre garden was a popular project



#### Further information

To find out how to get involved, visit: [lindengate.org.uk](http://lindengate.org.uk)



# Sew beautiful

Textile artist **Corinne Young** produces gorgeous works inspired by the natural world, writes **Helen Johnson**

**N**ATURE IS THE driving force behind the designs of textile artist Corinne Young. Gardens, antiques and recycling have all had a role in her work, but it's the natural world, and, in particular, butterflies that have made the biggest impression on the artist and which have also proven to be the best-seller.

Corinne was intrigued by cases of butterflies, typically collected in the 18th and 19th centuries, that she had seen in stately homes and decided she wanted to make her own collection – without the use of a butterfly net.

So she embroiders butterflies onto handmade linen paper, cuts them out, and wires them into place.

Traditional embroidery thread would be silk, made from silkworms, but Corinne won't use it. She explains: "I've been to silk mills, and unfortunately, the poor little creatures are boiled alive as this is the only way to extract the silk. So I use viscose, a plant fibre."

The butterflies, she says, are those that she sees in her garden in the Yorkshire Wolds. "I grow plants to attract them, and we get the little chalk blues here."

As well as butterflies, Corinne embroiders flowers and plants, botanically correct and recognisable.

She says: "My mother was a great gardener and she taught me about plants. Also, my parents grew up during the war, so everything was reused, and I just carried this on."

Now she scours charity shops and sales of factory leftovers, buying fibres and fabrics by the kilo. "People give me things, too," she adds.

Childhood laid the foundations of Corinne's textile skills: she learned to knit and sew, and began making things. Through life, she's added more skills, including, amongst others, crochet, interior decorating, tailoring and pattern cutting.

Corinne had her family at a young age, so did her degree in textile design after her children grew up. With a special interest in plants, she travelled to the Lindley Library at Kew Gardens. "They have beautiful herbal books and botanical drawings."

She also studied illustrations by 18th century artist Mary Delany. Working in an era when exotic new plants were flooding into the country, her works, says Corinne, are intricate, paper-cut, coloured designs.

"She worked with people at Kew, and they'd have plants specially brought for her to study," she adds.

Corinne's interests are reflected in her home,



which is furnished in a comfortable country house style. Richly patterned prints jostle with embroidered cushions and multicoloured patchwork. Display pieces include a Wardian case filled with embroidered flowers, a stitched tea service, and playful fabric taxidermy.

Despite having a bright and cheerful studio, Corinne frequently works on the sofa in front of the TV. She likes design and antique shows, but says:

"I always have to be doing something – my hands need to be constantly busy."

Today, she brings all her skills to her business, which she founded after graduating in 2003. She was soon busy, as flowers have never been out of fashion, and now, she says, there's renewed interest in them.

## Memorable projects

Memorable commissions include a series of embroidered panels for the Lord of the Rings stage show publicity; a series of pressed plant pieces for a London restaurant; and a collaboration at Burton Constable Hall in East Yorkshire.

She spent two years on the Lord of the Rings project. They wanted, she explains, large pieces for publicity events that could be easily removed to other venues. So she embroidered huge banners, each measuring 8ft by 2ft, onto linen paper that



**Words by:**  
**Helen Johnson**

Helen is a freelance writer with a love of country life who is based in Yorkshire

## STUNNING CREATIONS:

Butterflies are a favourite subject for Corinne, but she also does botanically-accurate embroideries of plants and flowers









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**MAJOR PROJECT:** The impressive Lord of the Rings panels made by Corinne to promote the stage show

could be rolled up like scrolls to transport.

She says: "It was vast. I flew out to Toronto for the launch. My works were hung in a ballroom and I had to stand on a cherry-picker to adjust them." But she thoroughly enjoyed it: "It was a red carpet event – incredible."

The pressed plants for the London restaurant were commissioned by a New York designer.

The brief was to make 20 pieces, of varying sizes, using native British plants. Corinne says: "It was February, so it was a challenge to find suitable plants. I had to use early flowering plants, and I was very lucky that some gardens and nurseries allowed me to collect from them.

"They particularly wanted thistles, so I had to find an early flowering one, *Cirsium*. They had to be dismantled to press them, then reassembled. And I did daisies, and tiny little herb Roberts. The unfurling fronds of ferns pressed beautifully."

She adds: "I couldn't have done it without the knowledge of plants I've gathered over the years."

## Unusual design

At Burton Constable, Corinne worked with artist Gideon Johnson. "We needed pieces that would sit in the room, with antiques, and people could walk in and not know which were antiques, and which were ours."

The brief included using recycled materials.

"We were scratching our heads for how to make a clock that would look like an antique. Gideon

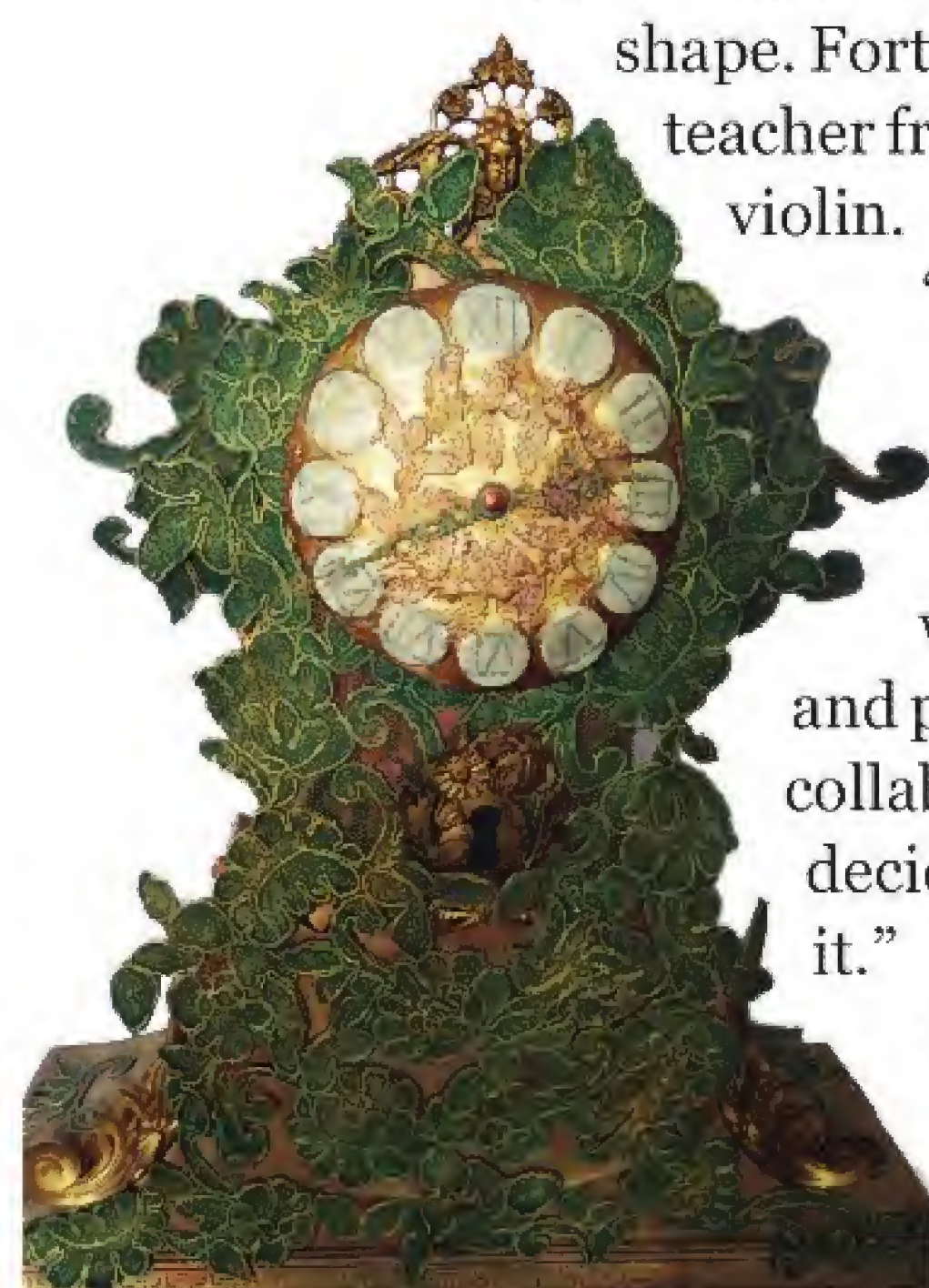
had the idea of using a violin, for the shape. Fortunately, we had a music teacher friend who had a broken violin.

"We removed the neck, cut open the back, put in a clock mechanism, and I decorated it with textile stitched and painted lace. It was a collaborative piece, but I decided I couldn't part with it."

Corinne loves learning and each commission adds to her skills. She began making



**PLAYFUL:** Corinne's version of taxidermy using embroidery is both fun and colourful



linen paper because she wanted a natural base for her embroidery. She says: "I'd come across silk paper, and I was interested – but I'm squeamish about the poor little creatures, but then, I came across some linen fibre. It's a natural plant fibre, and unbleached. It's taken me years to perfect the technique, so now I'm going to make a new range of flowers that show off the paper."

At the moment she's making botanical embroideries for a joint exhibition at RHS Harlow Carr. For the future, Corinne's hoping to collaborate with a group of artists who are searching for 'venues with interesting gardens', where they can take inspiration.

She says: "My work is niche, and it's nice to find the other people it fits with."

## Further information

Visit: [corinneyoungtextiles.co.uk](http://corinneyoungtextiles.co.uk)

See Corinne's work at RHS Harlow Carr, Harrogate, Yorks, throughout June, in a joint exhibition celebrating the inspiration of the garden.

Details at [rhs.org.uk/gardens/harlow-carr](http://rhs.org.uk/gardens/harlow-carr), tel: 0845 265 8070



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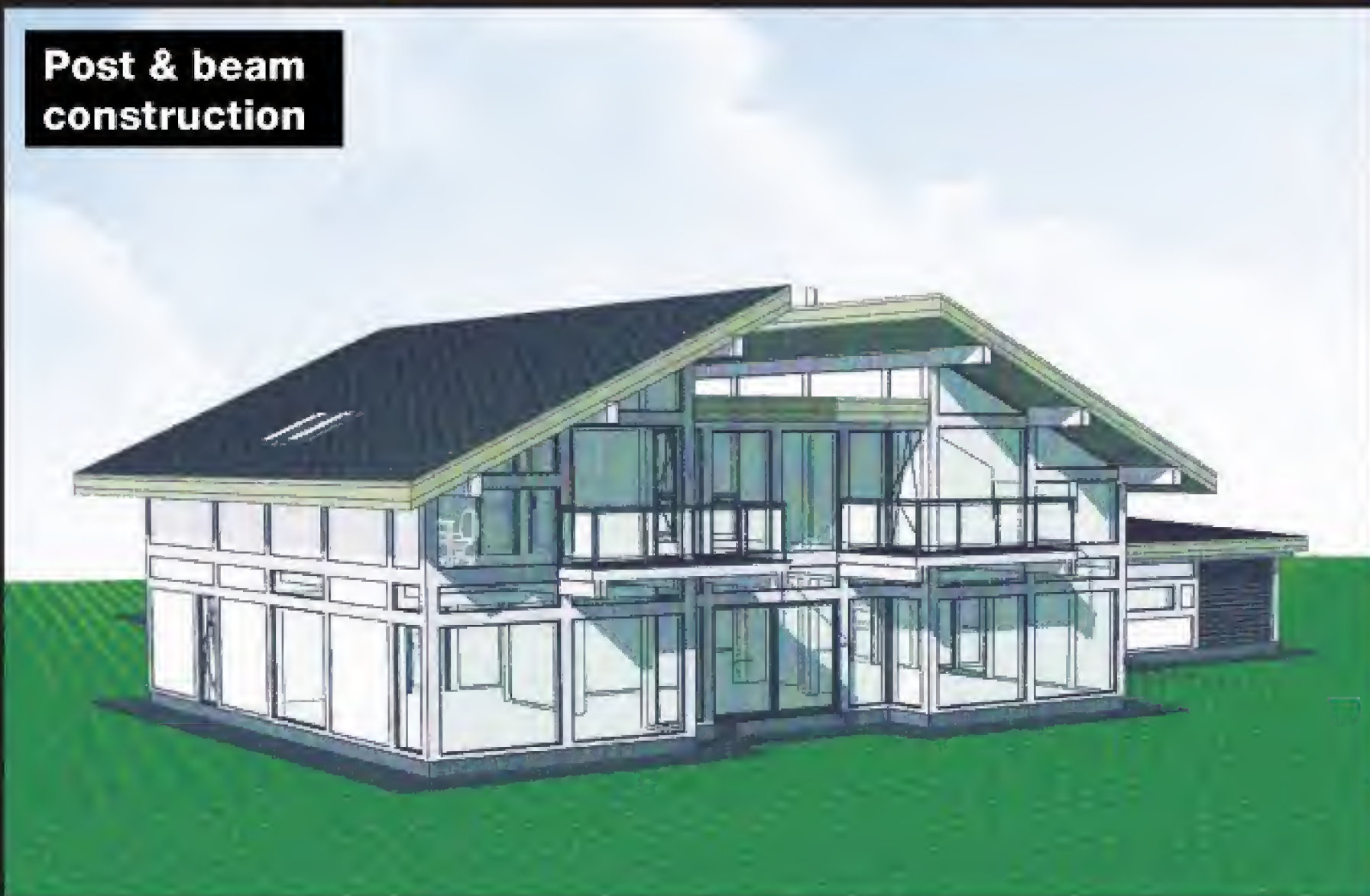
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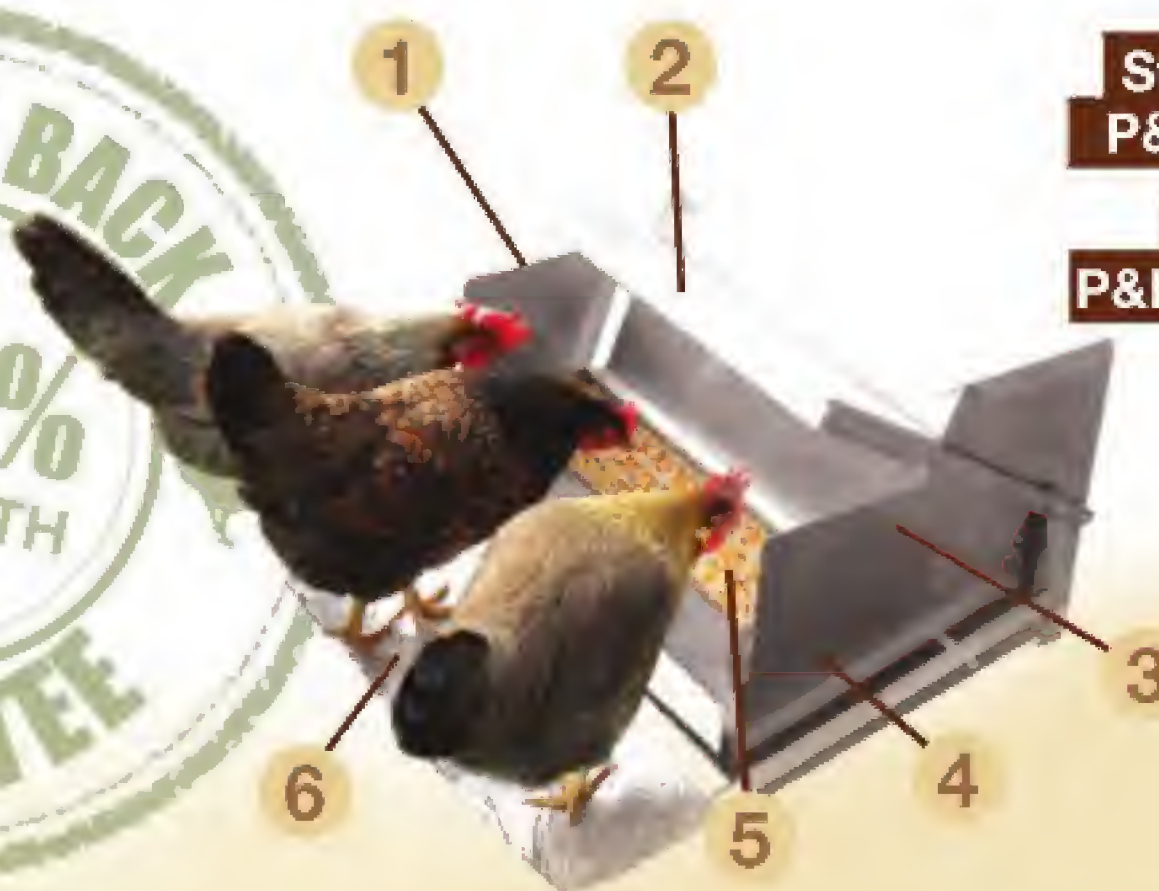
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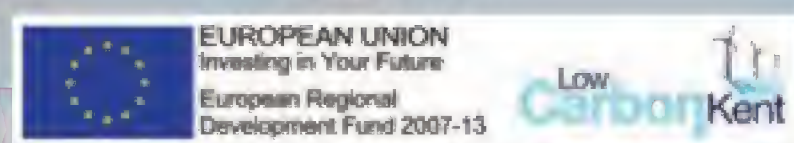
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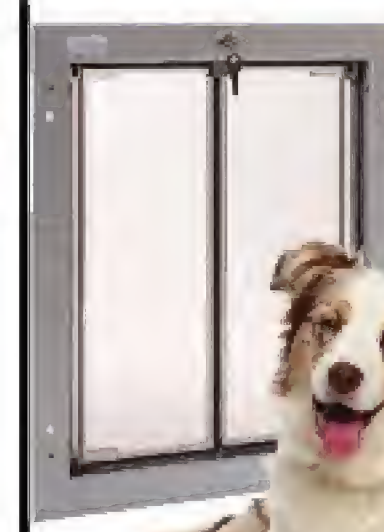


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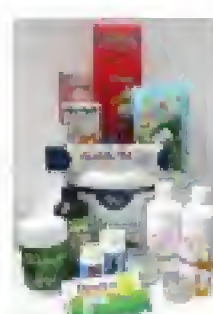
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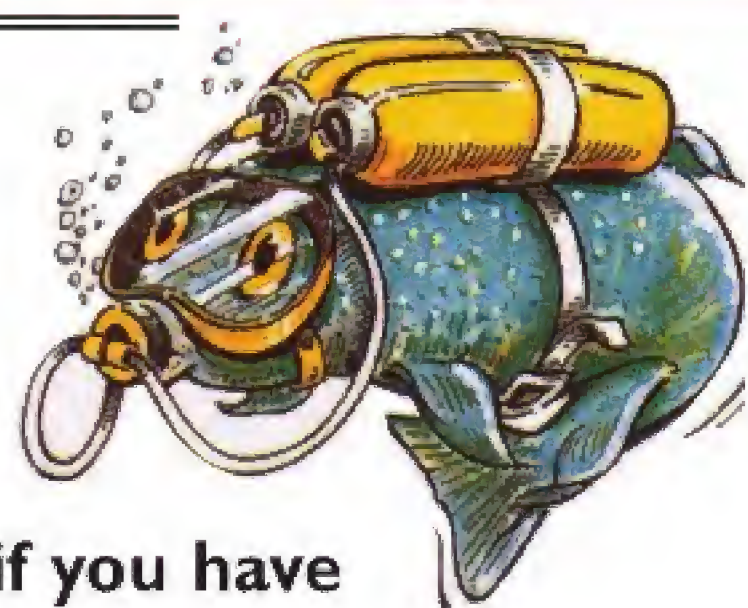
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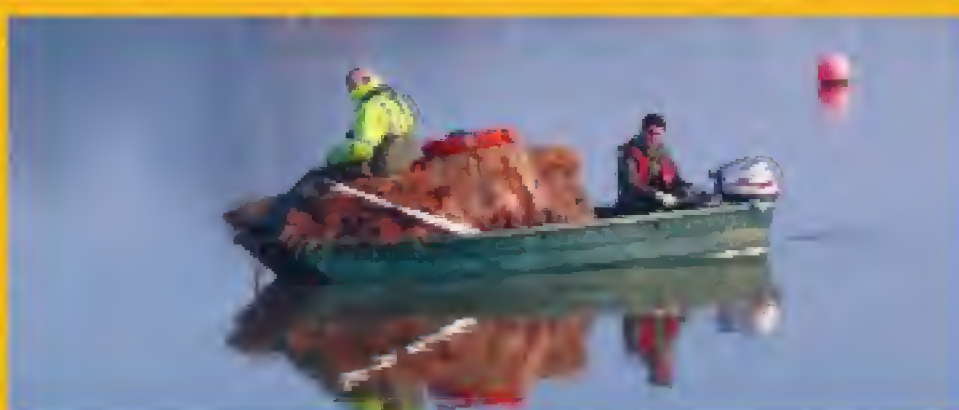
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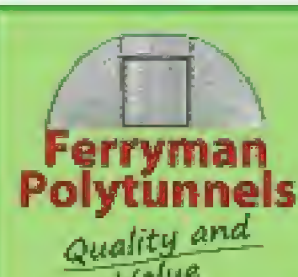
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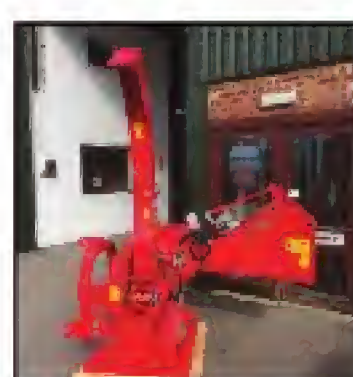


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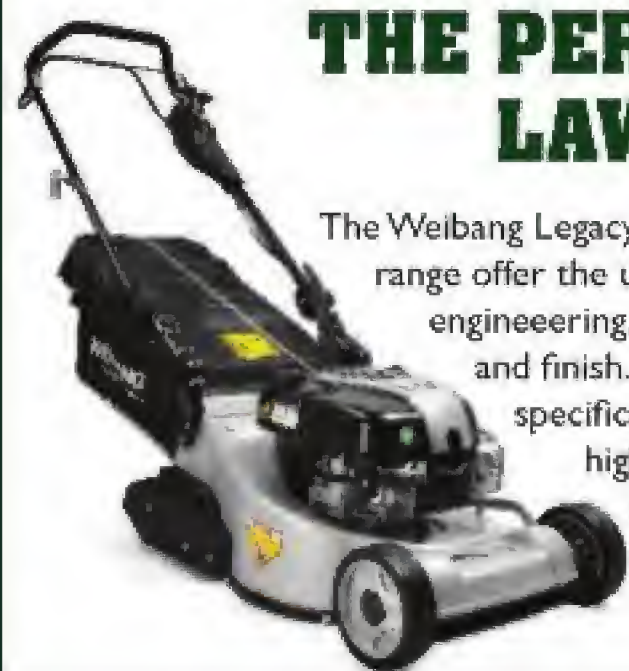


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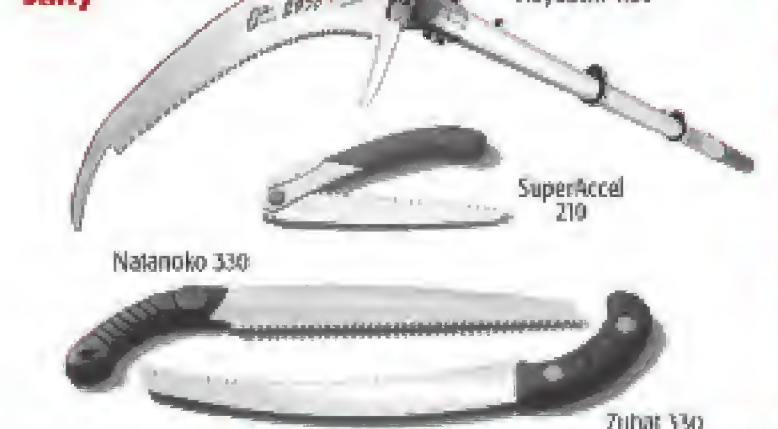
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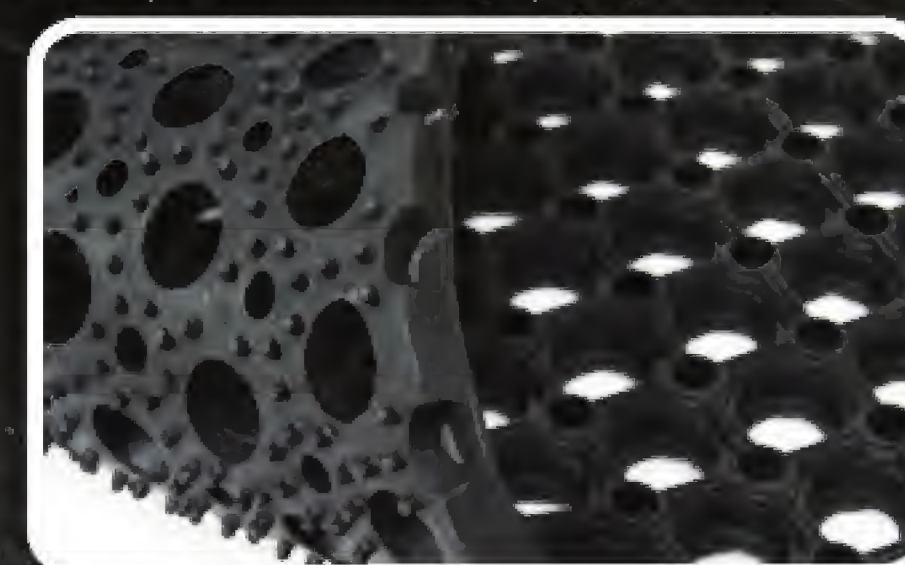
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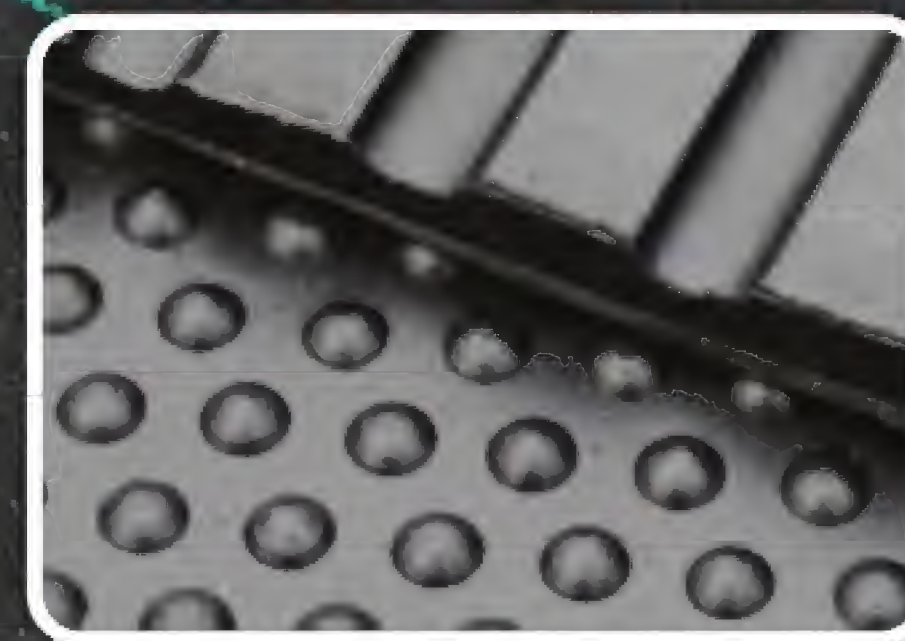


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**S**ECOND GENERATION mosaic artist Oliver Budd leads me to his workshop set behind his cottage in the Kentish village of Hawkhurst. As we walk up the steps through a terraced garden there is a beautiful mosaic bench, a mosaic table and circular mosaics in some of the steps themselves.

Oliver used to work with his father, Kenneth Budd, under whose exacting eye the young apprentice mastered his craft. They leased workshops at Sevenoaks, Westerham and finally Goudhurst before Oliver decided to move his business home a few years ago, tired of escalating rents.

He shows me photographs of commissions undertaken over the years, including a map of the trading routes of the world for the Sultan of Oman, which he completed with his father, to a more recent artwork for an international businessman depicting his three favourite yachts off the Croatian coast, now gracing the walls of the subterranean Turkish baths at his opulent Chelsea pied-a-terre.

Oliver studied art at Gloucestershire College of Arts and Technology, but his father is undoubtedly the key influence of his life.

"I went to work for dad when he could see I had mastered the 'Andamento' (the flow lines that emphasise shapes in mosaics). He then started to push me to the fore." Sadly, Kenneth passed away in 1995 aged 69, but his protégé forged ahead and is counted as one of the five leading mosaic artists in Britain.

Oliver explains: "To be any good the key skills you need are an ability to draw and a good sense of colour, using different hues for different effects so the end result isn't visually flat. My father, having come from an advertising background and being a

## Charlie's challenges Charlotte tries her hand at mosaics



**Words by:**  
**Charlotte Reather**

Charlotte is a freelance writer and comedienne who is always on the lookout for adventure

keen painter, was really into colour and I am too." It's time to get our hands dirty. Oliver shows me the wonderful boxes of coloured cubes I will be working with.

"Some come in large tiles, some you buy in sheets. We use coloured porcelain and different types of glass, including vitreous glass, glass flux (pigmented) and the top stuff – 'smalti', which I buy from an old Venetian family called Orsoni as it's the best in the world."

Oliver explains that he makes his mosaics in sections, which can be made in his workshop and transported. He uses a traditional reverse method of mosaic making.

"I draw a picture onto transparent plastic, which is exactly accurate. Turn the image over on the work surface and, using spray adhesive, stick the pieces of glass onto the plastic upside down. As the picture begins to take shape I take some bendy MDF, make a mould around the outside of the section and screw it to the bench to keep it in place."

Oliver makes up a mix of neat cement and starts to add it between the joints.

"It's like pre-grouting and with the next layer I mix in an aggregate and build it up to the depth I want," he explains. He then leaves it for three days before undoing the MDF and transporting it to the site where it's put together with the other sections of the mosaic and bonded onto a substrate of concrete.

I'm working on a corner of a mirror today. Knowing I'm not a natural with a pencil, Oliver draws a leaf and goes over the pencil lines in marker pen. It's my job to cut triangular shapes of glass using a pair of 'wheelies'.

I apply adhesive to the glass using a small plasterer's tool and fix the pieces in place.

"Basically, it's painting by numbers," he says. But it's also like dry stone walling I muse, insofar as every stone, or in this instance piece of glass, has its place. I start to get a sense of 'what goes where' as I finish the leaf.

I take the mirror home and inform my husband he needs to grout it with a squeegee and Kerapoxy CQ (whatever that is). He says when we finally settle down in our 'forever house' all these skills are going to come in very handy.

I picture myself walking through our dry stone walled garden, a trug over my arm, pass the lime-plastered, thatched summer house, and through to the mosaic swimming pool... And, back in the room. ♪







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